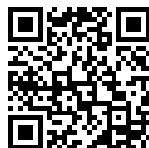

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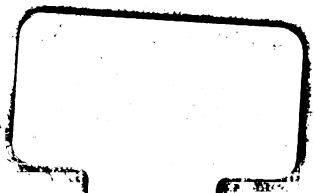
Bangor, N. H.
1887

My dear Sir,
I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst.

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D I S C O U R S E S
O N
SCRIPTURE MYSTERIES,
PREACHED AT
ST. MARY'S, OXFORD,
BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY,
IN THE YEAR 1787;
A T T H E L E C T U R E
FOUNDED BY THE LATE
REV. JOHN BAMPTON, M. A.
CANON OF SALISBURY;
WITH
N O T E S
ILLUSTRATIVE AND CRITICAL.

BY WILLIAM HAWKINS, M. A.
PREBENDARY OF WELLS, VICAR OF WHITCHURCH, DORSET,
AND LATE FELLOW OF PEMBROKE-COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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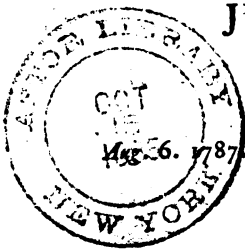
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TO
HIS GRACE
THE
ARCHBISHOP
OF
CANTERBURY.

MY LORD,

HAVING had the honour of
being appointed preacher of
the *Bampton Lectures* for the current
year, by the Heads of Colleges in
Oxford, I have the happiness to intro-
duce them to the Public with the
additional great advantage of your
Grace's protection; an advantage the
more considerable, as it derives as
much from the character, as the rank
of my patron.

In this situation it will, I presume, become me to address your Grace rather under the form of preface than in the style of dedication.

My slender pretensions to your favour are grounded in the earnest endeavour of the following sheets fully and circumstantially to vindicate that faith which, I need not tell your Grace, is not barely attacked, but insulted every day. The Charity which *is not easily provoked* must resent the freedom, I had almost said the audacity which distinguishes the infidels of the present generation. These Gentlemen affect to be the party aggrieved; and to console themselves at the same time with a hope, and sometimes a persuasion of the speedy abolition of confessions and systems, and, in consequence

DEDICATION. v

quence of it, the revival of evangelical doctrine in its native simplicity.

I cannot think opinions openly and arrogantly hostile to the national establishment can be justified even by their sincerity. But infidelity in general is without this excuse: it has been repeatedly shewn to draw its principal resources from the vigilance of captiousness, the popularity of profession, the artifice of dissimulation, the confusion of things not really connected, and the occasional suppression, or adulteration of truth. To these I am sorry, for our own sakes, to add the inconsistency between certain controversial terms, and the imprudence, or unwariness of concession. Such resources as these are indeed inexhaustible. Mr. *Bampton's* wise and pious institution, and every

a 3 other

other of a similar nature, supposes as much. We contend with enemies, who, though with unequal forces, will always be able to take the field. However, my Lord, I flatter myself I have happily chosen more advantageous ground than many of my fellow-soldiers in this warfare; to whose names on other accounts I look up with deference and veneration. After all, the event must be left in the hands of Providence. I have only to beg the favour of the intelligent reader to peruse these discourses and the annexed annotations, (which will be equally necessary,) with an inclination to be satisfied; and in that spirit of candor and impartiality with which, I trust, he will find them to have been composed. I request his attention throughout the performance, and reasonable allowances for the inaccuracy

accuracy, or inequality that may be discovered in it. I hope he will be biaſſed, not by ſpeciouſneſs of principle, or habit of attachment, but by preponderance of argument. I ſubmit it to his judgment, whether I have in any inſtance ſhewn an undue warmth, or unwarrantable reſentment; and deſire him finally to determine, as he ſhall upon the whole be perſuaded, not of the abilities of the advocate, but the merits of the cauſe. Open to conviction myſelf, I ſhall always be ready to rectify an error, or to renounce an opinion, on competent representation; but ſhall not pay the leaſt regard to any cenſure or animadverſion, the features of which ſhall manifeſtly betray it to be the offspring of prepoſſeſſion, chagrin, or malevolence.

viii DEDICATION.

With sincerest wishes and prayers
for your Grace's health and happiness,
and for the peace and prosperity of
that Church over which you so wor-
thily preside,

I remain,

With all duty and respect,

My LORD,

Your much obliged and

Most obedient servant,

WILLIAM HAWKINS.

Extract from the last Will and Testament of the late Reverend JOHN BAMPTON, Canon of Salisbury.

—— “ I give and bequeath my Lands
“ and Estates to the Chancellor, Masters,
“ and Scholars of the University of Oxford
“ for ever, to have and to hold all and singular the said Lands or Estates upon trust,
“ and to the intents and purposes herein after
“ mentioned ; that is to say, I will and appoint, that the Vice-Chancellor of the
“ University of Oxford for the time being
“ shall take and receive all the rents, issues,
“ and profits thereof, and (after all taxes,
“ reparations, and necessary deductions made)
“ that he pay all the remainder to the endowment of eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, to be established for ever in the said
“ University, and to be performed in the
“ manner following :

“ I direct and appoint, that, upon the first
“ Tuesday in Easter Term, a Lecturer be
“ yearly chosen by the Heads of Colleges
“ only, and by no others, in the room adjoining to the Printing-House, between
b “ the

“ the hours of ten in the morning and two
“ in the afternoon, to preach eight Divinity
“ Lecture Sermons, the year following, at
“ St. Mary’s in Oxford, between the com-
“ mencement of the last month in Lent
“ Term, and the end of the third week in
“ Act Term.

“ Also I direct and appoint, that the eight
“ Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be preach-
“ ed upon either of the following subjects
“ — to confirm and establish the Christian
“ Faith, and to confute all heretics and schif-
“ matics—upon the divine authority of the
“ Holy Scriptures — upon the authority of
“ the writings of the primitive Fathers, as
“ to the faith and practice of the primitive
“ Church — upon the Divinity of our Lord
“ and Saviour Jesus Christ—upon the Divi-
“ nity of the Holy Ghost—upon the Articles
“ of the Christian Faith, as comprehended
“ in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

“ Also I direct, that thirty copies of the
“ eight Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be
“ always printed, within two months after
“ they are preached, and one copy shall be
“ given to the Chancellor of the University,
“ and one copy to the Head of every Col-
“ lege,

“ lege, and one copy to the Mayor of the
“ City of Oxford, and one copy to be put
“ into the Bodleian Library ; and the ex-
“ pence of printing them shall be paid out
“ of the revenue of the Lands or Estates
“ given for establishing the Divinity Lecture
“ Sermons ; and the Preacher shall not be
“ paid, nor be entitled to the revenue, before
“ they are printed.

“ Also I direct and appoint, that no per-
“ son shall be qualified to preach the Di-
“ vinity Lecture Sermons, unless he hath
“ taken the Degree of Master of Arts at
“ least, in one of the two Universities of
“ Oxford or Cambridge ; and that the same
“ person shall never preach the Divinity
“ Lecture Sermons twice.”

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE I.

JOHN XVIII. 38.

Pilate saith unto him, What is Truth?

THIS question, of all by far the most important, was put to our blessed Saviour by the *Roman Governour*, perhaps carelessly, perhaps contemptuously, but certainly without the least wish for information. In much the same spirit of scorn, or with similar indifference, the same question is every day in the mouths, sometimes of sceptics and scoffers, and sometimes of men of a more serious cast, who affect to be persuaded that we cannot, and, it may be, desire not to give them satisfaction. Unhappily, the Christian world is divided and subdivided almost infi-

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nately

2 DISCOURSE I.

nitely; it is parcelled out into sectaries of a thousand denominations. The fact is, though the right of private judgment in matters of religion, which has been exercised from the beginning, was justly and necessarily asserted by the leaders and friends of the REFORMATION, it must be acknowledged, folly, perverseness, pride, and enthusiasm, have, by severally maintaining it, been productive of that strange multiplicity of religious sentiment which we have so much cause to lament; of that schism, heresy, scepticism, and infidelity, which have all along disturbed the Church, but fix a mark of peculiar disgrace on the last and present century.

And indeed, when it is considered, that the Scriptures are on many accounts particularly liable to be misapplied, perverted, or misconstrued; (a) that some passages are to be understood in a literal, and some in a figurative sense; that some things are expressed agreeably to the modes of common speech, and some in pure condescension to the human capacity; that passages are to be compared
with

with each other in order to a true understanding of them, and doctrines to be deduced, not so much from single and separate texts, as from the manifest tenor of the Scriptures at large; that not unfrequently one and the same text shall be capable of different, and even opposite construction; that though most places in holy writ are of universal importance, yet some are of temporary and occasional purport only; that the sacred writings, strictly speaking, are the foundation of a rule of faith and manners, such as a creed, formulary, or confession, rather than the rule itself, as will, I trust, in due time more fully appear; and that an assent to the collective body of scripture, as true, does not imply a knowledge, or belief of all scriptural truths; when all this, to which more, were there occasion, might be added, is fairly considered, we cannot possibly be at a loss to account for that variety of notion, that wildness and absurdity of conceit, that extravagance, or impiety of opinion, which I just now observed has more or less so shamefully dishonoured the Christian name in all ages.

Of this exuberance of folly and wickedness Popery has ever been industrious to avail itself. From the acknowledged liableness of the Scriptures to the grossest abuse, when in the hands of such as are *unlearned and unstable*, (to use the apostle's words,) the Church of *Rome* draws her most specious argument against the common use of them; and would fain have us infer the necessity, or the certainty of an infallible authority lodged in the Church for the decision of controversies, and ascertainment of a rule of faith, from the confessed convenience and utility of such an authority. (*b*) But, unfortunately for her pretensions, as much error and absurdity has repeatedly been demonstrated to be within her pale as out of it. *What is truth?* becomes therefore with many a question of as much difficulty as importance; or, rather, of more form than importance; some encouraging themselves in scepticism from these circumstances, and others blindly acquiescing in any mode of religion, or in none at all, or at best in that which is usually called natural religion, from a pretence of the utter impossibility of discover-

DISCOURSE I. 5

discovering the true under such a complication of perplexity.

With points of inferior consequence I shall not trouble myself; but to such as deny, or call in question the capital articles of our religion on the strength of the above considerations, let me insist that nothing of this nature ought to supersede their endeavours to find the truth, and much less to discourage their obedience to it when found. After inquiry we may in some respect or other be mistaken, but without it we are inexcusable. In fact, the very diversity, or contrariety complained of may be justly urged in behalf of the faith which is received in the Church. Were the doctrine of the Trinity, for instance, impugned from one quarter only, and by consistent and uniform opposition, infidelity would be a much more formidable thing than it is; but you may as well look for *one language* at *Babel* as for a catholic system of unbelief, if I may be indulged with the expression. To enumerate all the heresies which have at different times torn and dismembered the

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Church

6 DISCOURSE I.

Church of Christ, is in a manner to confute them; and these, their common animosity against her excepted, are *at perpetual enmity* among themselves. Nay, what is yet more extraordinary, we shall find infidelity itself abounding in mysteries, even while it reprobates them almost with the confidence of a *faith which could remove mountains!* If the sacred theory we are to maintain be in many respects incomprehensible, the substitutions of human wisdom will in due time be shewn to be at least equally so; and to require the same degree of assent without any thing like the same foundation.

What is truth, say others among us, what is it but a system of doctrines officially taught, and formally transmitted from generation to generation?

But if doctrines are true, why not officially taught, and carefully transmitted? Is profession ridiculous, or authority contemptible, as such? Indeed, the question is not, what faith the Church?—but—*what faith the*
Scrip-

Scripture? Now by Scripture, and the earliest antiquity, our surest guide, and purest precedent, we are not only willing, but wishful to be tried. It is true the bulk of Christians are not equal to this trial; in a certain sense, they *care for none of these things*; they take matters upon trust; they are not able to *give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the faith that is in them*, except that they were born and bred in it, and suppose it to be unquestionable. It is with respect to this implicitness of assent, this tameness of acquiescence, as it is opprobriously called, that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity has no less impiously than ludicrously been exposed to contempt under the description of the **Trinity of the Mob!* But this is very unfair representation. Surely no argument can be drawn from the incapacity, or the credulity of the *many*, to the disadvantage of a doctrine that, with respect to the grounds on which we defend it, solicits, demands, defies the penetration of enquiry, and the inquisitive-

* See p. 16, 36, 37. in Preface to *Stillingfleet's Discourse* in vindication of the doctrine of the Trinity.

8 DISCOURSE I.

ness of criticism. The spiritual state of the *common people* all over the world falls nearly under the same predicament; but at the same time a proportionable degree of satisfaction will always be derived to every man from every degree of rational assurance that he is in the *right way*; or belongs to a communion wherein the truth is held in purity approaching nearest to the standard of primitive Christianity.

What is truth?—Say others. We are no strangers to the doctrines publicly established; to the faith asserted in your Articles, and expressed in your Creeds; but to these *Subscription* is much more universal than agreement. We can produce you names even among yourselves of persons *not a whit behind the very chiefest* Divines in point of rank, probity, or understanding, who nevertheless hold that God is to be *worshipped after a way which you call heresy*; who *preach another Gospel than that which ye have received* from your fathers, *constantly affirming*, or perpetually insinuating, that *ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures*.

Too

DISCOURSE I. 9

Too true indeed it is that the principal controverted points subsisting among those "who profess and call themselves Christians" are of the most serious nature. If the tenets of our gainlayers and adversaries of many appellations are right and just, the doctrines of the Trinity, and of the resurrection of the body, (which will be the objects of the ensuing disquisitions,) are heresies of the most abominable, or ridiculous tendency. However, these are circumstances which should not check, but stimulate the spirit of investigation. It will be of infinite moment to inquire whether we or they are the mistaken party, and on which side error really lies; whether *our* doctrines or *theirs* have the strongest foundation in scripture and antiquity; are best supported by presumptive argument, and corroborative evidence; or have least recourse to artifice, and the pitifulness of subterfuge and evasion. We do not wish to have this matter determined either vulgarly by a majority of voices, or invidiously by the reputation of names.

But

But again, say others, *What is truth?*—What good purpose is answered, or what advantage gained by this extraordinary zeal for theory and establishment? What doth it but *gender strifes*, and feed the flame of contention? The practical doctrines of the gospel are so forcibly, yet so familiarly inculcated, as not to be liable to misinterpretation. *Concerning the faith* thousands have erred, but, *as one of our own poets hath said,*

“His can’t be wrong, whose life is in the right.”

It is well for us there is nothing argumentative in the jingle of a couplet. I confess myself to be one of those who are hurt by every effort that has a plain aspect towards resolving all religion into morality. I consider every attempt of this kind as an indirect attack upon the fundamentals of Christianity. According to the idea of these reasoners, the character of the *Messiah*, and of the *Son of God*, will dwindle into that of a mere Legislator, or moral philosopher, who *teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.*† This text, and texts

† Tit. ii. 12.

congenious with this, may plausibly be urged in exaltation of *good works* to the exclusion of faith: but let them be contrasted with the following, *he that believeth, and is baptiz'd shall be saved;** *he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,†* &c. &c; and where is boasting on the part of moral honesty, or evangelical righteousness? As speciously, or as justly as men may harangue in demonstration of the excellence of piety and virtue; or as loudly, or as reasonably as they may exclaim against the violence, and much more the virulence, which has actuated the spirit of controversy in too many instances; I presume, no intelligent person, if he is impartial, will deny, that the *faith* which St. Jude tells us *was once delivered to the Saints*, whatever we are precisely to understand by it, is something entirely distinct from mere morality; that it ought *earnestly* to be *contended for*, agreeably to the same Apostle's exhortation; that it is very possible to contend with *meekness*; that errors, and schisms, and heresies are represented in scripture as things more or less sinful, dangerous, and damnable; and

* Mark xvi. 16.

† John. vi. 47.

that

that consequently it is of the utmost importance to our spiritual interests to be right in principle as well as in practice. The petulance, the pride, and the malevolence of bigots, and of *disputers of this world*, as the Apostle calls them, will no doubt be *brought into judgment* no less than the grossest immoralities; but this will not by any means supersede, or retard an honest and charitable attempt to enquire into and ascertain the leading doctrines of our common Christianity.

Complaints against the damnatory clauses of the *Athanasian Creed*, as it is commonly called, reverberate from more quarters than one. People do not seem to be sufficiently aware that a right faith and a good life are required by this form of confession under the same penalty. “Which faith except a man
 “keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he
 “shall perish everlastingly. They that have
 “done good shall go into life everlasting, and
 “they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
 “This is the catholic faith, which except a
 “man believe faithfully he cannot be saved.”

It

DISCOURSE I. 13

It is plain these clauses are to be considered as simply declarative on scriptural grounds of the necessity both of faith and of good works to salvation ; and at the same time as leaving all men to that infinite mercy, and those inestimable merits, which are fully adequate to the pardon and atonement of sins, failings, ignorances, and errors of integrity. (c) Which few considerations will, I apprehend, fairly deliver the Creed before us from the reproach of uncharitableness. With regard to the several articles of which it consists, I trust, they will be found, in the course of these disquisitions, to have foundation in a fully competent authority ; and in the mean time I shall endeavour to remove one general prejudice against them, and to create rather a prepossession in their favour, by evincing, that their acknowledged mysteriousness and incomprehensibility does by no means unqualify them for our assent.

“ Man is as such a rational creature ;” and as a rational creature he is a believing one too. We can no more conceive him to be
without

without belief, than without sense, thought, or reflection. The Atheist who *says in his heart*, as well as with his lips, *there is no God*, believes there is none. He protests against the supposed folly, or extravagance of the fundamental article of all religion; and on the strength of false conclusions, resolves every thing into a concourse of atoms fortuitously uniting; or into the operation of an unintelligent principle which we call nature; or, in other words, into an everlasting succession of causes and effects. It is possible for a man to deny his own existence, or that there is any such thing as motion. We have heard of instances of this sort; though properly they are instances, not of false persuasion, but of insanity. (*d*) Still man is a rational creature, whether he reasons well or ill; and whether, in consequence of such reasoning, his faith be well or ill grounded. It is certain we know little or nothing by intuition. The mind yields assent to many mysterious truths by forming a very small chain of deductions; such as the immensity of space, the infinite progression of number, and eternity, as well *a*
parte

parte ante as a *parte post*. “Space and duration,
 “ says an ingenious author, are mysterious
 “ abysses in which our thoughts are confound-
 “ ed with demonstrable propositions, to all
 “ sense and reason, flatly contradictory to one
 “ another. Any two points of time, though ne-
 “ ver so distant, are each of them exactly in the
 “ middle of eternity. The remotest points of
 “ space that can be imagined are, each of them,
 “ precisely in the centre of infinite space.” *

In fact, we have no stronger, or more adequate conception of immensity than of omnipresence; we have no clearer idea of the existence of SOMETHING from all eternity than we have of eternal generation. Faith, it is true, strictly speaking, has reference to religion only; † but, I hope, a truth or a mystery is not inadmissible purely on account of its respecting practice, or implying obligation. This will readily be granted even by infidels who deny the truths of Revelation; and much more by such Christians as have

* See *Deism Revealed*. Vol. 2. p. 145.

† See Note at p. 3 of *Howes's Discourse on the abuse of the Talent of Disputation in Religion*. &c.

called

called into debate particular points of that Revelation, to which in general they profess to subscribe. It is well worth remarking that Deists and Heretics never fail to attack the professed atheist with such reasonings, as, if pursued through their just consequences, may fairly and successfully be enforced upon themselves. For if *he* affects to decry the fundamental principle of all religion, the Being of a God, on account of the pretended inconceivableness of it, will not *they* observe, in order to confute him, that, unless a more complete, a more uniform, and intelligible system could be built on the ruins of this great article, such his exception can have no weight? And this is the very reasoning we urge against the principles both of deists and heretics. With the professed atheist I shall no farther concern myself; but desire to observe, that deists and heretics of all denominations are agreed with us in one general point, the acknowledgement of the existence of God, and consequently the incomprehensibleness of the Divine nature, attributes, and operations. The primary notion
which

which the human mind frames of God is this general and complex, yet negative idea of incomprehensibleness. There is a certain preeminence, if I may so call it, in the Divine essence, &c. which utterly precludes investigation. But if so, all mysteries, whether natural or religious, whether relative, *e. g.* to the extension of space, &c. or to the nature of the Deity; all these, if considered purely as mysteries, will stand upon a level in point of credibility. And let a revelation be supposed, all adventitious truths introduced thereby will be fixed upon the same foot; because faith cannot have a stronger foundation in human reason than in divine authority. This is granted without difficulty; but then as the deist denies the authenticity of those writings which we affirm to contain such revelation, so the heretic disputes the sense and scope of them. The question therefore is, whether the opinion of the one, and the unbelief of the other, is respectively the result of judgment, or of passion; of conviction, or of pride; of impartial enquiry, or of unwillingness to submit the understanding of man to the

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the *wisdom of God*? For, I repeat it, neither the one nor the other can, consistently with his own principles and acknowledgments, controvert the received sense, or deny the authority of those writings which the Church holds to be the *Word of God*, barely on account of mysterious truths contained in them. If the Divine Essence be necessarily incomprehensible, no Revelation can possibly make it less so; so far from it, that the very idea of a Divine Revelation, with respect to that essence, implies a Revelation of mysteries; *i. e.* of truths undiscoverable, and inconceivable by our natural powers; and accordingly, the credit of Revelation is rather confirmed than weakened by the number and importance of such truths. For it is but natural to expect a more ample display of wonders, and larger discoveries of sublime and sacred points of faith in this Revelation; and surely God is not the less to be believed, the more he communicates to us of his nature, properties, and dispensations. As far as these remarks affect Revelation in general, heretics in general will admit the justness

ness of them ; though at the very instant that they allow the writings in question to be the sole rule of faith, they endeavour, as much as may be, to reduce that rule to the measure of their own judgments and apprehensions. I am however already justified in asserting, that as much as some people are averse to believing what they do not understand, they cannot avoid believing what they do not understand ; and that therefore, on proper authority, it is full as reasonable to believe an hundred mysteries as one.(e) And here taking my leave of the deist, I would desire the heretic by what appellation soever distinguished, to recollect, that Revelation left human nature as it found it ; I mean with respect to our intellectual faculties ; that, *from the beginning of the creation* to this very hour, man is to be considered as a reasonable creature, as a free-agent, as sometimes believing upon competent evidence, sometimes governed by passions, and sometimes influenced by prepossession. A truth which accounts in a moment for the multitude of persuasions which have engaged the speculative world. To ex-

pect, or require that God should manifest himself and his proceedings, &c. to every man fully and personally, is to destroy every notion not only of faith, but of obedience likewise; and to wish to invert the essential frame and constitution of things. Difficulties, unfurmountable difficulties of many kinds occur to our contemplations on that frame and constitution; difficulties, on which the light of Revelation darts not a single beam. If we indulge the excursive faculty of imagination beyond the bounds which reason and scripture have set us, we shall find ourselves inextricably entangled in perplexity, and sometimes in impiety too. Who shall discover the consistency between Divine prescience and human free-will? Yet that man acts freely, and that God foreknows all events, and decrees accordingly, are equally truths not to be shaken by any seeming irreconcilableness or contrariety whatsoever. So again: that the most perfect *freedom* of agency must be ascribed to God, cannot possibly be controverted; and yet does he not *necessarily* foreknow his own actions? Does he

not *necessarily* act agreeably to the eternal rules of justice, wisdom, and holiness? That God is in no sense the author of evil, either natural or moral, every reasonable man, and much more every Christian will maintain; yet is it not certain, that had this world never been made, neither *sin* nor *death* could have *entered* into it? Human wisdom has fatigued itself to no purpose in the ventilation of these subjects. (f) Many real truths, but at present seeming paradoxes, will doubtless be capable of future explication; and spiritual things in general should rather be received with the humility of reverence, than encountered with the arrogance of discussion. There will be no end to *doubtful disputations* while men's sentiments are modified by a partial attachment to a favourite principle; and while truths, apparently opposite and contradictory, are separately contended for, which ought both to be admitted; as ultimately they will be reconciled.

What has been here advanced concerning faith, or mysteries in general, will, I trust,

secure at least a fair and earnest attention to what I shall have to offer in defence of the mysteries of the Gospel. If these mysteries should be found to be real objects of faith, it will be neither right, nor safe, to think, or to speak of them indifferently, unhandsomely, or contemptuously.

That the doctrines of the Church of *England*, the doctrine of one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, and that of the Resurrection of the Body, are as reconcileable to our ideas as the consistency of free-will with necessity, or of the Divine perfections with the existence of evil, I should suppose, no man can deny; and therefore the great question is, whether those doctrines be undeniably in those Scriptures which all with whom I am concerned acknowledge to be the rule of faith.

That, with respect to the Trinity, the doctrine of the Church has been so long, so frequently, so copiously agitated with much less success, on our part, than might have been expected from some of the best *Soldiers of Jesus Christ*,
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the *weapons* of whose *warfare* have been mighty in this spiritual field; this, I must confess, is a circumstance enough discouraging; but however, not without its counterbalance in certain considerations. *The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.* Matters are capable of being set in new lights; nor will any exertion be desperate which has for its object the honour of God, and the peace of his Church. Men are wedded to their errors as much as to their vices; but as we are not to be remiss, or hopeless in our labours for the reformation of sinners, though the *whole world* should lie in *wickedness*; so neither should we be impeded or disheartened in our attempts for the conversion of infidels and heretics, by that pride, that prejudice, however contracted, that *hardness*, or that *slowness of heart*, which indisposes them for the reception of truth.—After all, inquiries of this nature are of very considerable use and importance; they cannot fail at least to *stablish, strengthen, and settle* ourselves; to *root and ground* us in that *faith* which we shall find to be built upon the most immoveable foundations.

That assertors and vindicators of this faith, that champions for the Church militant, might never be wanting in this place, the zeal and the piety, the wisdom, and the munificence of our founder hath nobly provided. The present institution is happily distinguished by its location; and, in some degree to answer and accomplish it's end, I shall proceed with as much confidence and satisfaction as may reasonably be supposed to arise from a proper sense of obligation, a full persuasion of the truth of the great doctrines in question, and particularly of the merits of the *Trinitarian* cause.

D I S-

DISCOURSE II.

JOHN V. 39.

Search the Scriptures.

TO the Scriptures of the Old Testament our blessed Saviour referred the *Jews* for satisfaction with respect to his claims to the character in which he appeared among them; and to the Scriptures of the New Testament, together with the other, I am to refer for proofs of those great but mysterious doctrines which I have undertaken to defend: the doctrines contained in the Liturgy, and in the Articles of the Church of *England*.

Without laying before you at present all, or the principal texts by which the doctrine
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of the Trinity is supported, or in which the absolute divinity both of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is explicitly asserted, or necessarily implied, we may previously remark that, supposing them to be authentic, unequivocal, and intelligible, the infidel is in fact precluded from taking advantage of those passages which are declarative either of the acknowledged humanity of Jesus Christ, or of the gifts and operations of the blessed Spirit: that humanity, and those operations being things manifestly distinct from the Divine essence, and real personality. What we shall have to do therefore will be to enquire, in due time and place, whether the exceptions which have been made against the texts with which the catholic doctrine is fortified, are grounded in principles of common candour and common sense; or, in other words, whether the interpretations of anti-trinitarians are critically just, and agreeable to the rules which are generally allowed to govern interpretation. In the mean time, it will be well worth while to examine, whether the doctrine before us

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is not proveable by evidence which, though indirect and collateral, is irresistible. There is hardly any such thing as framing a sentence, or a proposition that cannot be prevaricated with; but the tenor of a context, and the weight of circumstances will not easily admit of sophistification.

According to the Athanasian Creed, as it is called, “the Catholic Faith is this; that “we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; and that the Godhead of “the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy “Ghost is all one: the Glory equal, the “Majesty co-eternal.” *But what saith the Scripture? Saith it not, in effect, the same also?* That the Father is the first Person in the Trinity, merely in order of nomination; the Son, the second; and the Holy Ghost, the third; is sufficiently demonstrable from many considerations. In the first place, though the three divine Persons are usually mentioned in a manner which at first sight seems to import an order of a different kind, yet this order is upon some occasions

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casions inverted; e. g. in St. Paul's often quoted benediction to the *Corinthians*; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you*: and in the following passage of the same Apostle; *there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.** And, in other places, the same inversion is observable with regard to the first and second persons; *Ye know*, says the Apostle, *that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, &c. hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*† Now our Lord Jesus Christ HIMSELF, says the same Apostle, and God, even our Father, *which hath loved us, comfort your hearts, &c.* No man, says our Lord, *knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.*‡ To this we may add the introduction of St. Paul's epistle to the *Galatians*; *Paul, an Apostle, not of men, neither by man,*

* 1 Cor. xii. 4. † Ephes. v. 5. ‡ Matt. xi. 27.

but

but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who hath raised him from the dead, &c. From these instances we may at least draw this inference, that the general priority of order above mentioned imports no distinction, or preeminence of essence.

The root, ground, or fountain of essence may be acknowledged to be in the *Father*, without the least prejudice to the *Trinitarian* doctrine, which supposes an ETERNAL communication to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. The terms *root* and *fountain*, &c. are customary indeed, but by no means strictly proper, or precisely descriptive. They are familiar, not to our ideas, but to our ears. When we speak of, or contemplate the Divine nature, absolutely, and without reference to particular dispensations, God the *Father* is generally the first in our conception, as far as he can be the object of conception, but not to the exclusion of the Divine nature either of the *Son* or *Holy Ghost*. In these dispensations, in the heavenly œconomy, we have a manifest and obvious reason for addressing our
prayers

prayers and petitions, public and private, for the most part, to the first Person of the Holy Trinity. In short, the terms *Father* and *Son*, under which it has pleased infinite wisdom, by way of analogy, to represent this mysterious relation to our minds; these terms imply nothing more than nominal preeminence and subordination: if the Anti-trinitarian should insist that they do imply more, and ask what we mean by eternal generation, or procession, we will answer him the moment we are told what he means by eternal essence itself. (g)

Again. The Father is commonly represented to us under the character of the maker, the governor, preserver, and judge of the world; the Son under that of our redeemer, advocate, and saviour; the Holy Ghost under that of our guide, comforter, and sanctifier; and yet these characters, we shall see, with the names, properties, and attributes of the Deity, are frequently reciprocated. Thus, in the following places among others, the office of Redeemer is ascribed in
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expels terms to the first person ; or, if you please, to God absolutely considered. *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave. I will ransom them from the power of the grave ; I will redeem them from death.* My soul shall rejoice which thou hast redeemed.†* So likewise in numberless passages the Father is styled Saviour. To instance only a few. *There is no God else beside me, a just God, and a Saviour.‡ Paul, an apostle, &c. by the commandment of God our Saviour, § &c. We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men. To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty now and ever ||.* And again ; the work of sanctification is indiscriminately said to be the work of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Thus our bodies are sometimes called the *temple of God*, and sometimes of the *Holy Ghost*. The Apostle declares, that *it is God which worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.* The same Apostle prays, that *the very God of peace may sanctify the Thessalonians ; and*

* Hosea xiii. 14.

† Psalm lxxi. 23.

‡ Isa. xlv. 21.

§ 1 Tim. i. 1.

|| Jude v. 25.

make

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*make his Hebrew converts perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight ; and, not to multiply examples, St. Jude addresses his general Epistle to those that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ. To which we may add, that the Father hath sometimes other titles and characters given him which belong more peculiarly to the Holy Spirit, and is called the God of consolation, and the God of all comfort ; as, according to one Apostle, all scripture is given by inspiration of God ; while we are assured by another, that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

Again. We find all the great properties and characters of the first Person frequently attributed to the second. In a passage in *Isaiah* he is even called the (*b*) *everlasting Father*.† And (to lay no stress upon prophetic phraseology) is not the first person the supreme God, a self-existent, independent Being, the creator, the governor, and preserver of the world?

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 21.

† The Father of the everlasting age. Bp. Lowth.

So

So is *Jesus Christ*. For *before Abraham was*, says he, *I am* ; * and he that came from heaven is above all ; he filleth all in all ; he is the head ; and by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible ; &c. All things were created by him, and for him ; and he is before all things, and upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and by him all things consist. † Of some of these and the following texts at present we shall take the sense to be granted. Is God the Father a being eternal and unchangeable ? So is God the Son. For he hath neither beginning of days nor end of life. He is *Alpha and Omega*, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, which is, and which was, and which is to come ; the Almighty ; ‡ *Jesus Christ*, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Is omniscience an attribute of the true God ? So is it likewise of him whom he sent into the world. For he knew all things ; he knew what was in man ; he knoweth the hearts of all men ; § he it is who searcheth the reins and heart. Can any power less than in-

* John viii. 58.

† Rev. i. 8.

‡ Coloss. i. 16.

§ Acts i. 24.

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finite raise the dead? And is it not the prerogative of the Supreme God to judge the world? Yet to do both is the work of *Jesus Christ*. For he is *the resurrection and the life*; * *and as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will; and whoso eateth his flesh hath eternal life, and he will raise him up at the last day.* † In consequence of such resurrection we must all appear before his judgment seat. ‡ And once more; is not the true God invisible and incomprehensible? So is *Jesus Christ*. For, agreeably to a text before cited, *no man knoweth the Son but the Father*. Again. The character and office of the Third Person are explicitly attributed to *Jesus Christ*. The Apostle's wish, or benediction, which we have already had occasion to refer to, may be produced as one instance of this. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work. For without Christ we can do nothing; and he of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemp-*

* John xi. v. 25. † Ibid. vi. 54. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 10.
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tion;* and he gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it; and the Apostle could do all things through Christ which strenghtned him. Farther; the characters and properties both of the *first* and *second* Person in the Holy Trinity are likewise many of them ascrib'd to the *third*. Thus, in the old Testament, the work of creation seems to be attributed to the operation of the Holy Ghost, as a distinct personage, or agent. *The Spirit of God*, says *Moses*, moved upon the face of the waters. *Thou sendest forth thy spirit*, says the Psalmist, *and they are created*: and *Job* asserts, that *God by his Spirit bath garnish'd the heavens*;† and *the Spirit of God ha smade me*, says *Elibu*.‡ For whatever might have been the precise notion of the antient Jews, with regard to the *Spirit*, the *Spirit of God*, and the *Spirit of the Lord*, of which we find such frequent mention; or, whatever they might understand by that parallel expression, (in respect at least of the work of creation,) the *breath of the Almighty*, or the *breath of his mouth*; the light of the New Testament, I

Cor. i. 30. † Job. xxvi. 13. ‡ Ibid. xxxiii. 4.

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think, sufficiently directs us to the above interpretation. Thus again, the Holy Ghost is omniscient, and eternal; for the *Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God*;* and *Christ through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God*.† Thus the office of advocate, or intercessor, is attributed to the *Spirit, who maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God*.‡ Thus the resurrection of our Lord himself is said to have been effected by the power of the *Holy Ghost*; for *Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit*,§ and *he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us*. Thus again; both Prophets and Apostles are said to be sent, or commissioned by the *Holy Ghost*, as well as by the *Father* and the *Son*. *The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me*, says *Isaiab*; *the Spirit entered into me*, says *Ezekiel*, and said unto me, *go shut thyself within thy house*;|| and *the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabus and Saul for the work whereunto I*

* 1 Cor. ii. 10.

† Heb. ix. 14.

‡ Rom. viii. 27.

§ 1 Pet. iii. 18.

|| Ezek. iii. 24.

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*have called them.** Once more. The Holy Ghost is indiscriminately called the *Spirit of God*, and the *Spirit of Christ*; and the *Gospel of God* and the *Gospel of Christ* are terms equivalent; and the Apostles are sometimes stiled *servants of God*, and sometimes *servants of Jesus Christ*; and the Holy Ghost is said to *make overseers over the flock*; as God the Father hath set some in the Church, *first Apostles*, &c; and as the Son gave some, *Apostles*; and some, *Prophets*, &c. And, lastly, the very terms of our salvation are reciprocated. St. Paul testified to *Jews and Greeks repentance towards God*, and *faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*;† and among the principles of the doctrine of Christ, the Apostle reckons *repentance from dead works*, and *faith towards God*.‡ Our Saviour says in one place, *he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*; and in another place, *he that believeth on him that sent him hath everlasting life*. The general scripture doctrine is, that we are saved by the mercy of God through the merits of our Redeemer;

* Acts xiii. 2.

† Acts xx. 21.

‡ Heb. vi. 1.

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and yet our salvation is sometimes ascribed absolutely to the mercy, or grace of *Jesus Christ*. Thus St. *Peter* declares his and his brethren's belief, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall be saved through the grace of the Lord *Jesus Christ* ;* and St. *Jude* exhorts Christians to keep themselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord *Jesus Christ* unto eternal life.† To all this we may add, that the title of *Lord*, (which is one unquestionable character of supremacy,) is common to the three Persons in the *Holy Trinity* ; to the second it is applied as well as to the first in places almost numberless ; and to the third beyond all doubt in the following : *the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ* ; § *now God himself, and our Father*, (where, by the way, the word—HIMSELF—does not appear to be more emphatical than in the text sometime since cited,) *and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you ; and the Lord make you to increase, and abound in love one towards another, &c ; to the end he may stablish your*

* Acts xv. 11.

† Jude 21.

§ 2 Thess. iii. 5.

hearts

*beats unblameable in holiness before God, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** For that by the *Lord* in these texts we are to understand the *Holy Ghost*, is, I apprehend, demonstrable from these two considerations; first, because it is his peculiar office to *direct the heart, to make us to increase in love, and to stablish our hearts unblameable in holiness*; and secondly, because, according to any other construction, we shall at best make but very indifferent sense of either of these passages. From this inversion then and reciprocation, of which we have produced such a number of instances, the Divinity of each Person in the Trinity may reasonably be inferred; especially as the sense of many at least of the texts I have produced is obvious, and altogether uncontrovertible.

Again; this great point is evincible from the necessary sense, or natural import of certain passages. Let us turn to a few of the most remarkable.

1 Thess. iii. 11.

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The *sin against the Holy Ghost* is pronounced by our blessed Lord himself to be of all sins the most damnable. *I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.** Now without staying to inquire here into the precise nature of this sin, or how far it may be absolutely incapable of remission, or in what sense our Saviour's audience understood him, or he meant to be understood, it will be sufficient for our purpose to remark, that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in general, and particularly of the personal existence, and coequal divinity of the *Holy Ghost* with that of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, is plainly and truly though covertly comprehended in the above texts, and in their parallels in the other Evangelists. For otherwise we shall be unavoidably driven into

* Matt. xii. 31.

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the following absurd and execrable conclusions, *viz.* that the highest degree of impiety and profaneness against God the *Father* is a mere venial sin ; and that a blasphemy, or a sin, a sin, humanly speaking at least, without hope, or possibility of pardon, may be committed against a Being less than the supreme God ; and even against a kind of spiritual chimera, a motion, a virtue, a quality, or an operation.

Again. *As touching brotherly love*, says St. Paul, *ye need not that I write unto you ; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.** Now that by him who in this place is absolutely styled God, we are to understand *Jesus Christ*, I have little or no difficulty to pronounce, for the two following reasons ; first, because, though we may very properly be said to be *taught of God*, when we are instructed by the mouth, or by the preaching of his prophets, or apostles, or others commission'd by him, yet the doctrine of universal love and charity was more immediately

* 1 Theff. iv. 9.

and

and peculiarly the doctrine of our blessed Saviour: *A new commandment*, says he, *I give unto you, that ye love one another;—by this all men know that ye are MY disciples, if ye have love one to another**; *this is MY commandment, that ye love one another†*: and secondly, because the Apostle seems to regard this great duty as a principle recently taught, and particularly enforced by the precept and example of our Divine Master.

Again. *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father†*, says our Lord, and *he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me*. Now in what sense are these declarations true? Not in the literal; for the *Father* could not be visible in the human person of the *Son*; because *God is a Spirit, and no man hath seen God at any time; whom no man hath seen, or can see§*: and by necessary consequence our Saviour hereby in effect asserts, that, notwithstanding his appearance in the flesh, he himself really and truly partook of the Divine nature; that, according

* John xiii. 34.

† John xiv. 9.

‡ John i. 18.

§ 1 Tim. vi. 16.

to his own expression, the *Father dwelt in him*; or, in the language of the Apostle, in him *dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, or substantially.

Again. In the Gospels St. *John* the Baptist is called *the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths strait**: but in the evangelical prophet the style is at once more explicit and more majestic; *prepare ye*, says he, *the way of the Lord, make strait in the desert a highway for our God*.† In the course of the same sublime chapter *Jerusalem* is called upon to *lift up her voice with strength, to lift it up and say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God*. And then the prophecy proceeds in the following words. *Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, &c.* Now, unless it can be demonstrated, that these passages do not refer, ultimately at least, to the coming, and to the

* Matt. iii. 3.

† Isa. xl. 3.

person

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person of the Messiah, he is manifestly here announced under the different characters of a *good shepherd*, a *righteous judge*, and the *Lord God*. Besides, if there is no such reference, the several apostolical citations from the prophet are most impertinently ridiculous.

Once more. The first and second persons of the blessed Trinity are expressly distinguished, and respectively characterised as equal, in a passage wherein the Apostle occasionally asserts the unity of essence in the Godhead. *We know*, says he, *that there is none other God but one; for though there be that are called Gods, to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him**. It may be pretended indeed, that the terms under which the *Son* is here characterised are not of equal weight and significance with those which are descriptive of the *Father*; but I will take upon me to aver, that the same might have been pretended, had these terms been transposed,

* 1 Cor. viii. 4. &c.

and

and the passage had run thus ; *to us there is but one God, the Father, by whom are all things, and we by him ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, of whom are all things, and we in him.* And in many places the three divine Persons are severally specified and referred to, as jointly concurring in the wonderful scheme of man's redemption ; particularly in the following. St. Peter inscribes his first epistle to the *strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, &c. elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ* : and St. John salutes the churches of Asia with wishing them *grace and peace from him which is, which was, and which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ**. I am sensible indeed that by the *seven spirits*, just mentioned, interpreters do not universally understand the *Holy Ghost* ; but this at least, I cannot help remarking, may be offered in favour of the sense in which I have taken the expression, that it is a sense of which the

* 1 Rev. 4.

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words are full as capable as of any other whatever ; and that by the present construction a very considerable difficulty is removed which clogs a different interpretation. For admitting the *Holy Ghost* to be signified by the *seven spirits*, there will be nothing singular or unprecedented in this inversion of the order of Persons in the *Trinity* ; but why *angels*, according to the sense of some commentators, should be mentioned before *Jesus Christ*, (who is higher than the angels even in many of our adversaries conceptions,) seems accountable only by forced and unnatural explications. And still more perplexed, and incompatible with the nature of a blessing, or a salutation in general, or with the apostolical greetings and benedictions in particular, the sense of others seems to be, who by the *seven spirits* understand the *graces* of the *Spirit*, or the various operations of Divine Providence. (1) However, granting the passage to be rather obscure, I would take occasion to observe from it yet farther, that although we should be very cautious of deducing doctrines of faith from symbols, or mystical expressions,

pressions, yet types and emblems confessedly significant and characteristical will justify our suitable conclusions. It may be questioned perhaps what is precisely to be understood by the *seven spirits* just mentioned, or by many other symbols in the *Revelation*; but it would be excess of perverseness to doubt, whether the *Lamb* in our Apostle's allegorical prophecy be the emblem of *Jesus Christ*. Whenever therefore we observe divine honours plainly ascribed to the *Lamb*, or find him spoken of in terms of equal importance and majesty with those which are predicated of him who is indisputably the true God, the inference is obvious and unavoidable. How then will the *antitrinitarian* evade the force of such passages as these? *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, &c. heard I saying, Blessing and glory, and honour, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* The Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.† I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty,*

* Rev. v. 13.

† Rev. xvii. 14.

and

and the Lamb are the temple of it; and the city had no need of the Sun, &c. for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb†. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, &c. hid themselves in the rocks and the mountains, and said unto the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb‡. If any man should affect to make a distinction betwixt him that sitteth on the throne and the Lamb, or him who is said to sit on the right hand of God, in proof of the superiority of the former, I would desire him to remember, that the throne in question is called sometimes simply the *throne of God*; sometimes, as in a text lately produced, the *throne of God and of the Lamb*; that, in another place, the *Lamb* is said to be *in the midst of the throne*; in another, to *sit down in the throne of the Father*; and that it is the *throne of the Son of God* which is *for ever and ever*.*

* Rev. xxi. 22.

† Rev. xxii. i.

‡ Rev. vi. 15.

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So likewise, notwithstanding the diversity of constructions to which the expression of the *seven spirits* is liable, the personality, operation, and Divinity of the *Holy Ghost* may be demonstrated from the plain literal sense of many places in this book which are utterly void of emblematical ornament, or allusion. Indeed, the whole was evidently dictated by the *Spirit*, by whose *inspiration all scripture was given*, who alone *searcheth the deep things of God*,* and under whose immediate direction our Apostle wrote this epistle: for he tells us expressly, before he communicates his Revelations, that he *was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*; and elsewhere, that he *was carried away in the Spirit*; and the solemn call to all persons concerned is frequently repeated, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches*.† To all this we may add, that the personal inherency of the *Spirit* in the essence of the Godhead is demonstrable from St. Paul's illustration of a passage just now quoted from him. *The Spirit*, says he, *searcheth all things, yea, the*

* 1 Cor. ii. 10.

† Rev. ii. 11.

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deep things of God. For what man, continues he, knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. If the conscious spirit in man is man, the *Spirit* of God must be essentially God.

I desire to observe yet farther, that nothing less than a belief in the doctrine of the *Trinity*, as it is received in the Church, can satisfy the full demands of the terms—*faith*,—and *mystery*,—which we meet with so repeatedly in the New Testament, and to which there is so much reference under the old. The whole of the *mystery* of the divine *will made known in the dispensation of the fulness of times* ;* *the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world*, &c ; † or, if you please, the real character of the universal Saviour, who was to be both God and man, was a secret from the beginning. This stupendous doctrine was infinitely, and by the divine intention, too sublime for the carnal conceptions of the

* Ephes. i. 10.

† 1 Cor. ii. 7.

Jews ;

Jews; who, whatever they might ultimately understand by, or hope from the *Messiah* promised to *Adam*, to *Abraham*, to the *Patriarchs*, and to others; and foretold by the Prophets in language clear and strong indeed, but at the same time figurative, magnificent, and mysterious, expected, and primarily desired only a temporal deliverer, who should restore again, and perpetuate the kingdom to *Israel*. Nay, it is abundantly evident that the Prophets themselves, those *holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*,* had not an insight into the full scope, and whole import of the sacred truths and oracles which they delivered. Our Lord seems to allude to this ignorance, when he acquaints his disciples, that *many prophets and kings had desired to see the things which they saw, and had not seen them*,† &c. It is true this was said by way of anticipation; because, as will be shewn, it was not then even to them given to know the capital mystery of the kingdom of heaven. But St. Peter is plain and full upon this subject, when, speaking, in his first general epistle, of the salvation obtained

* 2 Pet. i. 21.

† Luke x. 24.

for us by *Jefus Chrift*, he proceeds in the following words; *of which falvation the prophets have enquired, and fearch'd diligently, who prophefied of the grace that fhould come unto you; fearching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chrift which was in them did fignify, when it testified beforehand the fufferings of Chrift, and the glory that fhould follow: unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themfelves, but unto us they did minifter the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gofpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoft fent down from heaven; which things the angels defire to look into.** The expreffions here are, I think, in themfelves almoft fufficiently decifive upon the great point before us. For it is hard to conceive that the Prophets, in whom, it feems, the *Spirit of Chrift* refided; and much harder that the angels fhould not have a clear idea of the work of human redemption; fhould not be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, (as St. Paul expreffes himfelf, with an eye, I imagine,

* 1 Pet. i. 10.

to this dispensation,) supposing that work to have been accomplished by any person less than *very God*; but admit the Divinity of *Jesus Christ*, and the inquisitiveness and the incapacity of men and angels will by no means be unaccountable. All this, I trust, will afford a most strong argument, that the *faith* which the Apostles preached after the ascension of our Saviour; the *faith* which was first *delivered* to the christian *Saints*; the *faith* which we are required to *bold fast without wavering*,* and to *build up ourselves upon*,† is a *faith* in the incarnation of the *eternal Son of God*; or, in other words, in the doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, as it has all along been held in the Christian Church. In consequence of the removal of a popular objection against all this, I hope in the ensuing disquisitions to set in a still clearer point of view the great doctrine before us.

* Heb. x. 23.

† Jude 20,

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DISCOURSE III.

ACTS I. 3.

By many infallible proofs.

THESE words immediately refer to the great event of our Lord's resurrection, but in consequence of it to the divinity of his person. Of this therefore I shall proceed to lay more proofs before you, taking first this opportunity to obviate the following popular objection; that, notwithstanding all that has been, or can be advanced, the doctrine before us is not so absolutely clear and indisputable as we would have it thought, and as a fundamental article of faith ought to be; in as much as no text can be produced which precisely, and *totidem verbis*,

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speaks

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speaks the language of the first article of our Church ; viz. “ in the unity of the Godhead
 “ there be three Persons of one substance,
 “ power, and eternity, the Father, the Son,
 “ and the Holy Ghost ; or of the second ;
 “ two whole and perfect natures, that is to
 “ say, the Godhead and Manhood are joined
 “ together in one Person, never to be di-
 “ vided, whereof is one Christ, very God
 “ and very man ; or of the fifth ; the Holy
 “ Ghost, proceeding from the Father, and
 “ the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and
 “ glory with the Father and the Son, very
 “ and eternal God.”

To all this, I apprehend, we may readily
 reply, that if there be any real force in such
 objections, it will operate much farther by
 necessary consequence than the objectors
 themselves can be supposed to desire it
 should. For it will supply the perverse, or
 idle caviller with pretences and exceptions
 against all the divine properties and attri-
 butes, as far as they are asserted in the first
 article. There is no *one* passage in the Scrip-
 ture

ture which literally tells us, that “there is
 “but one living and true God, everlasting,
 “without body, parts, or passions, of infinite
 “power, wisdom, and goodness, the Maker
 “and Preserver of all things both visible and
 “invisible.” The divine superintendency,
 &c, usually called *Providence*, is justly re-
 puted one of the capital doctrines of reli-
 gion. Yet, upon the principles of these ob-
 jectors, it should be no doctrine at all. For
 we meet with no such term as *Providence*, in
 the sense demanded, either in the *old* or *new*
 Testament. So that this doctrine must inevi-
 tably fall to the ground, unless it be main-
 tained and supported by natural inference ;
 or unless we are at liberty to make use of a
 proper term to express our sense of it. He
 who objects to the term—*Trinity*—as un-
 scriptural, should consider by what texts he
 will undertake to prove the *Unity* of the
 Divine Nature ; which, in the sense required
 by his argument, is a term no more to be
 found in Scripture than the other. In fact,
 upon the principle of our opponents, we
 shall be under a necessity of expunging a
 great

great part of the Apostles Creed, and even such parts of it as all Christians whatever, without the least scruple or hesitation, have assented to. For I desire to know by what express or literal authority of Scripture any person believes in the *Holy Catholic Church*, or in the *Communion of Saints*; or that our blessed Lord was *born of the Virgin Mary*, or *suffered under Pontius Pilate*, &c? In short, if we are to be absolutely precluded the use and application of proper terms and expressions in the investigation and exposition of Scripture-meaning, it will, I presume, be impossible to frame the most simple system, or formulary of Christian faith and doctrine, or any such thing as a *Creed* of any kind in the Church. The holy Scripture is the sole rule or measure of every form of confession, &c; it is the only test by which any doctrine, or system is, in all its branches, even the most minute of them, to be deliberately and ultimately tried; but it is not the rule itself; and indeed a little inquiry will shew us why the capital points of religion are not systematically delivered in the sacred writings.

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The doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, as maintained by the Church of *England*, was the doctrine of the Catholic Church at and before the time of the publication of the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, or it was not. If it was, the controversy is at an end. If it was not, we would fain know how to account for that great variety of passages, and those numerous circumstances, by which it is at least so plausibly countenanced, not to say forcibly defended. We would fain know how to reconcile with the character of the *meek* and the *lowly* Jesus, any one of his expressions which is capable of being construed into a claim to the Divinity. If this doctrine was the doctrine of the Church previously to the publication of the holy writings, they are sufficiently full and explicit for the satisfaction, or confirmation of Christians of all ages ; if otherwise, here is more than enough said to perplex and misguide them, and to lead them into errors of the first magnitude. The great question therefore, I take it, is, whether we have not all the reason in the world to infer from the very mode in which the doctrine

doctrine of the *Trinity* is inserted and inculcated in the sacred pages ; the question, I say, is, whether we are not authorised by this circumstance to conclude that this doctrine was antecedently received in the Christian world ? For instance ; supposing the doctrine of the *Trinity* to have been the standing doctrine of the Church when St. *John* (*k*) wrote his Gospel, we have no kind of difficulty to encounter ; but are we not very much embarrassed by the contrary supposition ? In the former case, we may readily conceive the Apostle to be asserting the Divinity of *Jesus Christ* in the most express terms at the beginning of his Gospel ; and, in the course of it, to record many particulars clearly declarative of the same ; not by way of formal answer to *Cerintbus*, or any other heretic that disputed, or denied it, but purely in flat contradiction to the novel and heterodox notions advanced and propagated by them ; and to encourage and stablish good Christians in the faith, as they had all along been taught. What this great Evangelist declares at the latter end of his Gospel, *viz.* that

that *these things were written*, or, as we may say, given under his own hand, that the Christians whom he addresses *might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, is perfectly consistent with their pre-acquaintance with these matters. Agreeably hereunto, and indeed in direct confirmation of our hypothesis, St. *Luke* (and many, it seems, before him,) *set in order a declaration of those things which most surely were believed among Christians,** that the person he writes to *might know the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed*. In the same light we may regard those passages in the epistles which have often been produced in vindication of the doctrine before us. Some of these epistles were, with respect to the main end and design of them, entirely of a temporary nature; being written with a view to the decision of controversies in the primitive Church, which for many centuries have been out of date; and upon several occasions and subjects of little moment to succeeding generations. Not one of them however was professedly written

* Luke i. 1.

in defence of the doctrine of the *Trinity*. According to our present hypothesis, a vindication of this kind had been absolutely superfluous; and though we cannot wonder to observe a point of this consequence frequently mentioned, or alluded to in these writings, yet it would be very unreasonable to expect to find it methodically or systematically taught.

The grand principle of the leading opponents of the doctrine under consideration is, that the only thing required of Christians to be believed with regard to the Person of *Jesus Christ*, is, that he was the *Messiah*, the Person promised and sent by God to redeem men from that death which they were inevitably appointed to as descendants of *Adam*; and that the *Messiah*, and the *Christ*, and the *king of Israel*, and the *Son of God*, are terms or titles in Scripture absolutely denoting one and the same thing. I need not tell you, that this is the favourite tenet of Mr. *Locke* in his treatise on the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, as delivered in Scripture.

Now

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Now we shall willingly admit, that the Apostles themselves were believers under this idea mostly, during our Saviour's residence upon earth; as 'tis certain, they had not the whole *mystery* of the Divine *Will*, the grand scheme of man's redemption, clearly and fully made known to them before our Lord's Ascension into heaven. *I have many things to say unto you*, he says to them, *but ye cannot bear them now*;* &c. and in saying this he had most probably an eye to the *mystery* of the Gospel. For though he took frequent occasions to assert and prefigure, as I may say, his truly Divine Nature, either directly, or by necessary implication, and could not but have been understood so to have done by his disciples, and by the *Jews*, who sought to stone him on that very account, yet, *in the days of his flesh*, many circumstances concurred to shake, or rather to overturn the faith of his followers, with respect to this great article. This is plain enough from the tenor of the evangelical history. It would be ridiculous to suppose that the Apostles could believe their Master to be the *Son of*

* John xvi. 12.

God

*God in the highest sense, or even to be the redeemer of Israel in any sense, when they all forsook him and fled. At the melancholy crisis I refer to, they conceived no doubt very different notions of their Lord from what they had once entertained of him, and afterwards did, when he was declared to be the Son of God with power, or to full effect, by his resurrection from the dead.**

The fact is, the scheme of human redemption by *Jesus Christ*, the *only-begotten Son of God*, in the strictest sense, was opened gradually, and propounded to the world as it were article by article. At first it must necessarily have been sufficient to have believed that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, the *Messiah*, or the *Son of God*, merely as executing a divine commission, &c ; his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation to the *right hand of the Majesty on high*, being subsequent points of faith; and accordingly we read of many that *believed on him* at different times, and in different places, long before the conversion of

* Rom. i. 4.

the

the *three thousand on the day of Pentecost*, whom we cannot but consider as believers in a much higher sense. The *faith* of Christians at that memorable period, and ever since, cannot with the least colour of reason be ascertained, or is to be measured by what is declared to be *faith* in particular instances recorded in the Gospels. The *faith* which made the woman whole, who had an issue of blood, * and the *faith* that saved, i. e. restored to sight the blind man near Jericho, † could not be that *faith*, the mystery of which St. Paul requires Deacons to hold in a pure conscience. ‡ In short, our Saviour's actual resurrection, by virtue of his own as well as his Father's power, (as we shall presently see,) cleared up a thousand difficulties in a moment, and amounted to a full demonstration of his Divinity. From a thorough conviction of this no doubt it was that his Disciples worshipped him; and St. Thomas in particular burst into that rapture of acknowledgement, *My Lord, and my God!* Though therefore the *Messiah*, or the *Christ*, be not

* Luke viii. 43.

† Ibid. xviii. 35.

‡ 1 Tim. iii. 9.

unfrequently called the *Son of God*, as a person *sent from God*, as a *teacher*, a *prophet*, or deliverer, &c. (as many even created beings, angels, &c. and men in general are called *Sons of God* in certain respects,) yet we insist that this appellation belongs peculiarly to *Jesus*, the *author of our faith*, as a Divine Person likewise; and that he is so called with reference to his nature, as well as to his offices. In some passages of Scripture perhaps, the precise import of this title may be controvertible; as when *devils* and *unclean spirits* call our Saviour the *Son of God*, and the *Holy One of God*; and when *Peter* styles him the *Son of the living God*. In answer to our Lord's question, *whom say ye that I am?* the disciples, according to *St. Mark*, replied by the mouth of *Peter*, *thou art the Christ*. In other places the significance of the title in question is discoverable by the context; as when *Nathaniel* addresses our Saviour in the character of the *Son of God*, the *king of Israel*. But why must all this affect the sense of any one passage wherein the appellation is given for reasons infinitely superiour? *The Holy*

*Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee; therefore alſo that Holy thing which ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called the Son of God.** (1) Could ſtronger terms be deviſed to expreſs the aſſumption of the human nature by the Divine? Is it not perfectly reaſonable to conclude, that the ſacred penmen often make mention of the *Son of God* with an eye to this myſterious and ineffable incarnation? And is it not certain that the perſon whom St. *John*, at the end of his Goſpel, calls the *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*, is the ſame with him whom, at the beginning of it, he ſtyles the *Word* that *was with God*, and *was God*? And if ſo, is not the ſenſe of the latter paſſage determinable by the preceding? Nevertheless the great Philoſopher above mentioned leaves the introduction to this Goſpel, and other paſſages in it of equal import, entirely unnoticed, as though it had no connection with his argument; which is a piece of diſingenuouſneſs that, one cannot avoid ſaying, did little credit to his cauſe, or to himſelf.

* Luke i. 35.

We shall be enabled, by such considerations as these, to put the true construction on the title of the *Son of God*, in most, if not all the places where it occurs in the *Epistles*; naturally taking into the account the many clear and express proofs of our Lord's Divinity which are cited from them. Of some of the most striking of these proofs, among other particulars, we shall for satisfaction-sake take a review in proper time. What Mr. *Locke* has adduced on this subject with a purpose to invalidate these proofs in general, will, I am confident, be utterly overthrown by the force of the following considerations; viz. that the *Epistles* are a part of the *New Testament*, and as essential a part as the *Gospels*; were like them, as was observed, written occasionally, and after our Saviour's *Ascension*, &c; that St. *Paul*, e. g. was as much a teacher of the *Gospel*, an inspired *Apostle*, as St. *Matthew*, or any other *Apostle* who has historically recorded the actions, words, or doctrine of *Jesus Christ*; and that a *Creed*, or system of faith should have its foundation in these *Epistles* together with the other Scriptures.

DISCOURSE III. 69

tures. The truth is, St. *John* in his *Epistles* asserts the same doctrine of our Lord's Divinity as in his Gospel. By Mr. *Locke's* way of proceeding, *viz.* arbitrarily admitting, or rejecting Scripture, we may mould Christianity into what form we please; and to this way of proceeding, among other causes, we are to ascribe the various Schisms, and Heresies, which have so long, and so deplorably divided the Christian world.

We may now, I imagine, fairly date the reception of the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity from his resurrection; and we will next see whether the subsequent accounts we have of the propagation of the Gospel be not entirely uniform and consistent upon this hypothesis, at the same time that they open to us the whole *Trinitarian* system.

Let it be observed then, that the first recorded prayer we meet with is that of the Apostles after the *Ascension*, in which the address is made immediately to our Lord himself, that he would be pleased to *shew*

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whether

whether he had *chosen Joseph, or Matthias,* to supply the place vacated by *Judas the traitor*, whom he had originally chosen with the *eleven Apostles*. *Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen.* * It is, I believe, generally agreed that this address was made to *Jesus Christ*, and if so, this attribution of omniscience to him is sure as strong an argument of his Divinity as any one thing which can be produced in demonstration of it. The ascription is to me on any other foot unaccountable. It is indeed true, that the Apostles had not yet a thorough insight into the evangelical mystery, nor had got perfectly clear of the prejudices and notions, respecting the *Messiah*, which they had imbibed in common with their countrymen : in consequence of which we find them asking our Lord, even after his resurrection, and after he had spoken to them, more or less explicitly, of the *things pertaining to the kingdom of God*, whether he would *at that time restore again the kingdom to Israel*? But that they put this question to

* Acts i. 24.

him

him as to one who was able to effect such restoration by his own inherent divine power, or, in other words essentially partook of the divine nature, must surely be concluded from this consideration ; that they could not possibly *now* entertain the least doubt but that all his declarations and assurances to them would be verified to a tittle ; and that as he *came forth from the Father, and was come into the world, so he would soon leave the world, and go to the Father ; and be glorified with that glory which he had with the Father, before the world was.* The case appears plainly to have been this : they did not yet comprehend the whole evangelical plan in the concurrence of three Divine Persons, in “ glory equal, in majesty coeternal ;” they did not perfectly conceive all the *things pertaining* to Christ’s spiritual kingdom ; the *kingdom of God* in the fullest and most exalted sense, of which he had been speaking to them allusively *forty days*, and with regard to which he may be supposed to have before promised them, that the *spirit of truth, whom he would send unto them from the Father, should guide them into*

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ALL truth, and *testify of him*. Accordingly, after the miraculous effusion of the *Holy Ghost* on the *day of Pentecost*, we find them discovering very different sentiments, and animated with spiritual expectations; we see them calling upon the people to *save themselves from an untoward generation*; exhorting them to *repent*, and to be *baptized for the remission of sins*; (*m*) renouncing in an instant all honours, profits, and pleasures of this world; *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of their Divine Master*; and, in a word, preaching the Gospel of *Jesus Christ, the Son of God*, through the inspiration of the *Spirit*, and in the truest sense of the expression. On the memorable day just mentioned we are told, that the *Apostles were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*. What they spake is not particularly specified; but in general we are given to understand, that they spake in all languages the *wonderful works of God*. On the credit of what has been advanced, which will be strengthened by what will follow, it is

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is most reasonable to suppose, that, by the *works* here referred to, the great work of redemption by the eternal *Son of God* is principally intended ; the *mystery of godliness*, exhibited in *God manifest in the flesh*, and displayed in the wonderful effusion of the *Holy Ghost*.

In the first address of the Apostles to the *Jews*, and *Jewish proselytes*, by the mouth of *Peter*, on the same day, both the humanity and divinity of our Saviour are plainly and distinctly asserted, or implied ; and in such a manner as hardly to be liable to misconstruction. The doctrine of the resurrection of *Jesus Christ*, considered as the confirmation of a still greater doctrine, that of his Divinity, is the chief *corner-stone* of our Christian Faith ; and, as such, is particularly insisted upon by the Apostles, who were *ordained* to be *witnesses* of it. And because this most important of all events could not be accomplished by himself in his mere human capacity, we find the holy writers frequently declaring that *God raised him from the dead*. But
let

let it be remembered, that *Jesus, whom God raised up*, is likewise as expressly said to have *risen*; and is styled by these very witnesses the *Holy One*, and the *Just*, and the *Prince of life* in different places; which beyond all doubt are titles appertaining to the Supreme God. Under the first of these characters, God the Creator is described in numberless passages of the *Old Testament*; and he who is the *Prince*, or author of *life*, according to the marginal reading, must be the same, in point of power and prerogative, with him to whom belong the *issues from death*; who *killeth and maketh alive*; and in whose hand is *the life of every thing*. Indeed the *Prince*, or Author of *life* must have *life in himself* from all eternity; must be emphatically *the life* and *resurrection*, as our Saviour calls himself; and therefore may as truly and properly be said to have *raised the temple of his body* by his own power, (to borrow his own phrase,) as to have been *raised from the dead* by the power of *God the Father*. We may say, in short, with equal truth and propriety, *Christ was raised from the dead*, or *Christ rose from the dead*,

DISCOURSE III. 75

dead, according to the Scriptures; the latter assertion importing his Divinity, the former not superseding it; and therefore when St. Peter told the men of Israel, that they had killed the Prince of life, I scarce know which strikes us most, the force of the implied truth, or the keenness of the sarcasm. But to return to the address of the Apostles. Peter, standing up with the eleven, says the sacred historian, lift up his voice, and said unto them, ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words; for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, &c; but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: and it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, &c; and I will shew wonders, &c; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Now let us compare the promulgation or delivery of this prophecy with the completion of it at this period. Observe the words of the Apostle in*

* Acts ii. 14.

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the course of his harange. *This Jesus, says he, (whom, with reference to his humanity, he had just before called a man approved by God,) hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, HE hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. That the Father and the Son concurred in this wonderful dispensation of infinite wisdom and power on an equal foot, it will scarce be possible for us to doubt, when we recollect that the second Person in the blessed Trinity is often represented as the giver of spiritual gifts, independently on any promise from, or association with the first. I will give you a mouth, says he to his Apostles, just before his passion, and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay. I am with you always, says he after his resurrection, even unto the end of the world.* Without him, he tells them, they can do nothing. And, to produce only one passage more out of many that might be cited, which has a manifest*

* Matt. xxviii. 20.

allusion

DISCOURSE III. 77

allusion to the effusion of the *Spirit* on the day of *Pentecost*, St. Paul assures the *Ephesians*, that *unto every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*. Wherefore, he adds, *he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*† It may be pertinent yet farther to remark, that sometimes neither the *Father*, nor the *Son*, appear to be concerned in this matter; the *Spirit* being said, of and by himself, to *divide his gifts and graces to every man severally as he will*.

But what shall we say to the invocation implied in the close of the prophecy we are considering; *whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved*? Whom are we to understand by the *Lord* here? This, I should think, may be determined by the significance of the same words in other places. They cannot be misunderstood in the original prophecy of *Joel*. And if we refer to the tenth Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the *Romans*, where they occur again, they will amount

† Ephes. iv. 7. 1 Cor. vii 11.

to

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to an irresistible, though indirect proof of the point in question. It is apparent that *Jesus Christ* is intended, or included however in all these texts, is accordingly to be worshipped, and consequently is God.

After what has been said, we shall not be at a loss for the construction to be put upon the inference with which the Apostle concludes this first discourse which we have been remarking on. *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ.* Just noting that in the phrase—*that same Jesus*—abundance of reproach is conveyed; I observe, that these words sufficiently express the two natures united in our blessed Saviour, the *Christ* in his human character, the *Lord* in his divine. But yet farther, the Apostle encourages his auditors, (who, it seems, were *pricked* in the heart by what he had preached to them,) to *repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ*, with the comfortable assurance that the *promise of the Holy Ghost* was unto them, and to their
Children,

Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD OUR GOD should call.

Agreeably to which declaration we are told, that *the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved*; and are afterwards informed, that *believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women*. Now that, according to the most natural and obvious interpretation, we are by the *Lord* to understand *Jesus Christ* in the two last quoted places, I presume will be admitted by every candid enquirer; and if so, it is he who is described under the character of the *Lord our God* in the text immediately before cited. When therefore we are told at the 42d verse of this Chapter, that the newly-baptized converts *continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine*; and afterwards, that the *Apostles taught and preached Jesus Christ*, and spake to the people the words of this life, &c. we may justly conclude that doctrine to have been the doctrine of redemption, as it has since been received in the Christian Church.

When St. *Peter* and his colleagues were brought before the *High-Priest and Rulers*,
 &c.

&c, in order to be examined concerning the cure of the *impotent* man at the *beautiful gate of the Temple*, we find them again insisting on the *resurrection* of their Master, as the fundamental article which was demonstrative of the truth of his mission and doctrine, and by consequence of the Divinity of his Person. This *deceiver* (as they had blasphemously reputed him) had *said, while he was yet alive*, that *after three days he would rise again*; he had affirmed to them, that *as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will*; he had declared to them his existence before *Abraham* in the most explicit terms, *Before Abraham was, I am*; he had *said, that God was his Father*, in the strictest sense, *making himself equal with God*, &c, &c. Supposing then *the Lord to have risen indeed*, the truth of these several assertions must necessarily follow. And, in fact, that he was *risen*, these *betrayers and murderers of the just one*, had they not been *stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears*, could not but have been convinced by *beholding the lame man who was healed*

DISCOURSE III. 81

healed standing before them ; and afterwards by the many signs and wonders which were wrought among the people by the hands of the Apostles, who most undoubtedly must have been endowed with such power from on high ; or, in other words, by their now glorified Master.

I have already in effect considered the sin of *Ananias and Sapphira*, who agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord, as a sin against the Third Person in the Holy Trinity ; and, I think, we may defy infidelity to put a fairer interpretation upon this portion of the Apostolical history.

I shall not dwell on the two invocations of the proto-martyr at the hour of death ; *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit ; Lord, lay not this sin to their charge ;* both which abundantly imply his faith in *Jesus Christ* as God ; but pass on to the account of the conversion of the *Ethiopian Eunuch* by *Philip the Deacon*.
* *The Angel of the Lord spake unto Philip,*

* Acts viii. 26, &c.

G

saying,

saying, arise, and go toward the South, &c; and he arose, and went; and behold a man of Ethiopia, an Eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, &c, who had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and, sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, go near, &c. And Philip ran to him, and heard him read, &c, and said, understandest thou what thou readeſt? And he said, how can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up, and sit with him. The place, &c. which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, &c. And the Eunuch said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Then Philip began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way they came to a certain water; and the Eunuch said, see, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he baptized him. The history is as succinct as possible: but why is it not as reasonable

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DISCOURSE III. 83

to suppose, that, when *Philip preached unto the Eunuch Jesus*, he laid the whole mystery of Christianity before him, the grand scheme of human Salvation ; and consequently that he believed *Jesus Christ* to be the eternal *Son of God*, as that, when he *baptized him*, he did so *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* ? There was no manner of occasion to be more circumstantial, supposing the primitive readers of this history to have believed in our sense of the term.

The next particular that meets us is the conversion of *St. Paul*. It will be proper to lay it before you. * *Saul yet breathing out threatnings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord, went unto the high-priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the Synagogues, that if he found any of this way, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him,*

* Acts ix. 1, &c.

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Saul,

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Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling, and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee; and Saul arose, and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man; but they led him, and brought him into Damascus. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, behold I am here, Lord. And the Lord said, Arise, and go into the street which is called strait, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus; for behold he prayeth; and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias, coming in, and putting his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests, to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me. And
Ananias

Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord (even Jesus that appeared unto thee) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus; and he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. Upon this compendious narrative I remark, first, that throughout the whole we must understand by—the *Lord*—*Jesus Christ*: secondly, that whether *Saul* received the *Holy Ghost* by virtue of the imposition of the hands of *Ananias*, and previously to his baptism, or after it; in either case, the whole *mystery of the Gospel* must have been communicated to him by immediate irradiation: and, thirdly, that therefore when *he preached Christ in the Synagogues that he is*

the Son of God, he asserted him so to be by eternal generation. Occasionally indeed, when he *confounded the Jews*, by proving *that this is very Christ*, his argument no doubt turned upon what he alledged to shew that *Jesus Christ* was the true *Messiah*, the *prophet that should come into the world*, and the *king of Israel* in a spiritual sense, whom they had, and did expect under the idea of a temporal Saviour. It seems after this *Saul spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus at Jerusalem*; and we are told, that upon his being *sent forth to Tarsus*, that he might be out of the reach of the *Grecians*, who *went about to slay him*, the *Churches had rest throughout all Judea, &c.* and *were edified, and walking in the FEAR OF THE LORD, and in the COMFORT OF THE HOLY GHOST, were multiplied*. I recommend the two last particulars of this passage to the attention of every candid and intelligent hearer. I add too, in corroboration of what has been offered under this portion of the history, that as *Jesus Christ* here tells *Ananias*, that *Saul was a chosen vessel unto HIM*, so *Ananias* tells *Paul*, (according to the latter's account of this

this transaction in another place,) that the GOD OF THEIR FATHERS had *chosen* him.*

The conversion of *Cornelius* and his family presents itself next to our consideration; and the short, but important narrative of it is pregnant with matter to our purpose. This *profelyte* of the gates (for such doubtless he was) *saw evidently an Angel of GOD coming unto him, &c.* To the voice which called to *Peter to rise, kill, and eat*, he answered, *not so, LORD; for I have never eaten any thing that is common, &c.* While *Peter* thought on the vision, the SPIRIT said unto him, *Behold, three men seek thee; arise therefore, and go with them, nothing doubting, for I have sent them.* GOD hath shewed me, says he afterwards to *Cornelius* and his friends, that *I should not call any man common, &c.* Now if we only suppose, as, I think, we can do no less than suppose, that *St. Peter* addresses *Jesus Christ* in the words—*not so, Lord*, we have plainly a distinction of *three* Persons in the sacred story. The same will be observable likewise in the

* Acts xxii. 14. x. 1, &c.

harangue of the Apostle upon this extraordinary occasion. *Of a truth I perceive that GOD is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth him, &c., is accepted with him. The word which GOD sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, (HE IS LORD OF ALL,) that word, I say, you know, which was published throughout all Judea ; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the HOLY GHOST, and with power, &c.* However, if it be objected, that it is by no means credible this devout *profelyte* and his family should be converted to the Christian Faith, in the *trinitarian* sense, by any thing asserted, or intimated in St. Peter's discourse to them, we will admit the objection, and leave our adversaries in possession of all the advantage they can make of it. We may venture to do so without the least hesitation ; for I desire it may be remembered in what manner, and by whom the Apostle was interrupted in his sermon, if it may be called one. *While Peter yet spake these words, says the sacred writer, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision*

DISCOURSE III. 89

circumcision were astonished, for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. By this miraculous event therefore all farther endeavours of the Apostle for the instruction of these people were happily superseded : they were, as St. Paul was, instantaneously as it were, guided into all truth ; and became believers in the same sense in which he was one. Agreeably hereunto, when St. Peter rehearsed this matter, and expounded it by order to those of the circumcision who contended with him, he tells them in the course of his narration, that as he BEGAN to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them that heard him. After this, would it not be idle to insist upon the inadequateness of St. Peter's address to the purpose of conversion in its utmost extent ?

We read in the sequel of this, and in the following chapters, that the word was preached, that the band of the Lord was with these preachers ; that a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord ; and that the word of God grew and multiplied. If these expressions are compared with others similar to

them

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them in this history, and with several already cited, they will be found, I presume, abundantly to coincide with our hypothesis, or, more properly, to confirm it.

But the time admonishes me to bespeak your attention to the continuation of my argument at the next opportunity.

D I S-

DISCOURSE IV.

ACTS I. 3.

By many infallible proofs.

IN prosecution of the subject which engaged us last *Sunday*, I proceed to the account of St. *Peter's* imprisonment, and what followed upon it, which the sacred Historian gives us in the 12th chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*.

When *Peter* was put in prison by Herod, it seems, prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him*; and on the night before his intended execution, the Lord, we find, sent his angel, and delivered him out

* Acts xii. 5.

of

of the band of Herod, &c. Now that *Jesus Christ was the Lord that sent his angel*, appears evident enough from these considerations. *Jesus Christ* is manifestly designed by this title, for the most part at least, through this whole history. *The Lord who delivered Peter by his angel* was certainly the same *Lord* who afterwards spake to *Paul in the night by a vision*; and who, upon another occasion, stood by the same Apostle, and encouraged him, &c. Now we should be glad to know, why these particulars are not to be regarded as equivalent to the appearances, and visions, and deliverances*, which are so frequent in the *Old Testament*; and, in that case, I need not point out the consequences they lead to.

In the following chapter, we see *Barnabas* and *Saul sent forth* by an immediate commission from the *Holy Ghost*. *The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them* §. *So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed*

* See Dan. iii. 28, and chap. vi. 22. § Acts xiii. 2.

unto

unto Seleucia, &c. The passage has been introduced before, and I leave it to the consideration of every attentive and impartial hearer.

The next occurrence is the conversion of the *Deputy S. Paulus*, who, we are informed, was a *prudent man*, and called for *Barnabas and Saul*, and desired to bear the word of God. And we may reasonably suppose that our Apostles preached it to him at large, and laid before him the great mysteries of the Gospel; and that he *believed* in the most extensive sense, and was confirmed in his faith by the judgment which he saw miraculously inflicted by the *band of the Lord* upon *Elymas the sorcerer*; being, as the sacred text expresses it, *astonished at the doctrine of the Lord*: the doctrine just above styled the *word of God*.

After this we find *St. Paul* preaching in the *synagogue of the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia**. Now these *Jews*, though they were

* Acts xiii. 16, &c.

not

not immediately concerned with them that dwelt at *Jerusalem* in the proceedings against our blessed Lord, were yet in all probability *consenting unto his death*; as they could not all this while be unacquainted with his story, or strangers to his pretensions. The Apostle therefore adopts the same mode of argumentation which St. *Peter* had used before, in his speech to the council, and lays the main stress on the fundamental article of the resurrection of our Lord from the dead. From the admission of this, the truth of the other great points of Christianity must necessarily follow. And it should seem that this discourse of our Apostle had a considerable effect upon some of his audience; and indeed that others conceived the full force and import of the most striking particulars in it: for we read, that *when the congregation was broken up*, many of the *Jews* and religious *profelytes* followed *Paul and Barnabas*; who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And, by the way, this circumstance may well be thought to imply, that the *Spirit of grace* had previously

ously operated in their hearts to their entire conversion. But the *next sabbath day*, we are farther told, *almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God*; and the result was, that the *Jews, filled with envy, spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming*. I would just ask then, whether this BLASPHEMY does not help us to a very strong presumptive proof of the sense in which these *Jews* understood *the things which were spoken* by the Apostle?

Let us now attend *Paul and Barnabas* to *Iconium*; and see whether we may not readily infer the nature of their doctrine from the success of it there. In this place, we are informed, *they abode long time, speaking boldly in the LORD, which gave testimony to the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands**. I would desire you to compare the last clause of this passage with the conclusion of St. Mark's

* Acts xiv. 3, &c. &c.

Gospel;

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Gospel; so then after the LORD had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, &c. and they went forth and preached; the LORD working with them, and confirming the word with signs following; and with the twelfth verse of the next chapter; all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders GOD had wrought amongst the Gentiles by them; and with the following passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the LORD, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; GOD also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the HOLY GHOST, according to his own will §; I say, I could wish you to compare these several places; and, I believe I might venture to abide by the conclusions you will draw from them.

We find our Apostles next at *Lystra*, where Paul cured the man that was *impotent in his*

§ Heb ii. 3, &c.

feet,

*feet, &c. : * on the sight of which miracle, the people lift up their voices, saying, the gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. Possessed with this notion, the priests of Jupiter brought oxen, and would have done sacrifice, &c. This no sooner came to the ears of Barnabas and Paul than they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, firſt, why do ye theſe things? We alſo are men of like paſſions with you, and preach unto you, that ye ſhould turn from theſe vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, &c. &c. Now this was preſiſely the expoſtulation which the occaſion demanded. The exiſtence of the one living and true God was to be aſſerted to theſe idolatrous believers in a plurality of deities. At that time to have oppoſed to their perſuaſions doctrines peculiarly Chriſtian, would have been altogether premature and unſeaſonable. It appears however that our Apoſtles had, before and after this, preached theſe doctrines at *Lyſtra*, and in the neighbourhood, with ſucceſs; though moſt probably, for obvious reaſons, not in the*

* Acts xiv. 8, &c.

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hearing

hearing of those that *would have done sacrifice.* For we read at the sixth verse of this chapter, that, being ware of the design of the Jews and Gentiles at Iconium to use them despitefully, &c. they fled unto Lystra and Derbe, &c. and there they preached the Gospel. And after the affair of the sacrifice, we are told, that there came to Lystra certain Jews from Antioch, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, &c.; that nevertheless he revived, and soon after preached the Gospel at Derbe, and taught many, and returned again to Lystra, &c, confirming the souls of the Disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith.*

We meet with nothing now that hath particular connexion with our argument, before the conversions related in the sixteenth chapter. Let us proceed then to these. At Troas, says the history, a vision appeared to Paul in the night; from which he and Silas assuredly gathered that the Lord had called them to preach the Gospel in Macedonia. Observe

* Acts xvi. 1.

then

then the account of the conversion of *Lydia* at *Philippi*. *A certain woman named Lydia, which worshipped God, heard us : whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, she besought us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, &c.* Now I would ask, whether we may not reasonably suppose the Lord opened this woman's heart for the reception of all evangelical truths, almost in an instant ? Whether her case is not at least similar to that of *Cornelius* ? And whether we are not as much authorized to take it for granted, that *the things which were spoken of Paul were the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*, agreeably to our system, as that this convert was baptized according to the form in *St. Matthew's Gospel* ? I would just remark here, that this system is in no wise prejudiced, either by the declaration of the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, who followed Paul and his companions, and cried, saying, *these men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of Sal-*

vation ; or by the Apostle's exorcism of that spirit in the following words, *I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.*

But let us turn to the conversion of the jailor, to whose custody *Paul* and *Silas* were committed at *Philippi*. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* * is the question which the former, in a fit of astonishment and terror, put to the latter. *And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, &c. And he was baptized, he and all his. And he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. To believe in God, and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, appear here to be convertible expressions. In short, I affirm that in this, as well as in preceding instances, we have good reason to suppose the persons preached to were made acquainted by the Apostle and his companion with the capital truths of Christianity, as they are taught in the Church.*

* Acts xvi. 30.

Not long after this, our Apostle and his fellow-travellers came to *Thessalonica*, where was a *synagogue of the Jews*. * And Paul (as the narrative proceeds) went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures; opening and alledging, that *Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again*, and that *this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ*. And some of them believed. It will be sufficient to observe here, that our Apostle dealt no doubt with these *Jews* and *Jewish* proselytes, as he had before done with others on like occasions. But the gross misrepresentation, and scandalous calumny of the *unbelieving Jews*, in the city just mentioned, is extremely worth notice. They drew *Jason*, as we are informed, and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, *these men that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also; † and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying, that there is another king, one Jesus*. Now it is perfectly reasonable to suppose, that *Jason* and these brethren proclaimed their crucified

* Acts xvii. 1, &c.

† Ibid. xvii. 6.

master king in a spiritual sense; nay, that they proclaimed him the sovereign of the universe, *king of kings, and lord of lords*; but it is clear, beyond a possibility of doubt, that they asserted no temporal jurisdiction of *Jesus Christ*, or said or did any thing *contrary to the decrees*, or against the government of *Cæsar*.

We have next an account of *Paul* and *Silas*'s preaching the Gospel at *Berea**; but there is nothing in it which discriminates it from parallel ones already spoken to, except the candid reception the Gospel met with at that place.

We will therefore follow our Apostle to *Athens*, where we find him *disputing in the synagogue with the Jews, and others that met with him*. Among these were certain philosophers of the *Epicureans* and the *Stoics*, who encountered him; some calling him a *babler*; others, a *setter forth of strange gods*, because he preached unto them *Jesus and the resurrec-*

* Acts xvii. 10.

tion.

tion §. I mean not to insinuate from this passage, that the Apostle is maintaining the Divinity of *Jefus Chrift*; as it is evident from the tenor of his ensuing difcourse to thofe heathen philofophers, which is fet down at large, that he has here only an eye to the prophetic character, or office of our bleffed Lord. If you will turn to the difcourse, you will find the great points in-
 fifted on, to be the unity and the spirituality of the Godhead, together with the doctrine of a future ftate, and the refurrection of *all* men from the dead, in confequence of *his*, whom God had *ordained* to be the judge of the world. This was a proper beginning with heathens. But what effect had this difcourse upon thefe idolatrous philofophers? *When they heard of the refurrection*, continues the facred ftory, *some mocked, and others faid, we will hear thee again; howbeit certain men clave unto, him, and believed, &c.* Our Apostle appears then to have made converts at *Athens*, though we do not read that they were *baptized*, or indeed believed in the fun-

§ Acts xvii. 16, &c.

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damental

damental articles of Christianity, according to our hypothesis. Without doubt, these articles, the great mysteries of faith, were gradually opened to them afterwards, and previously to their admission into the church by baptism. For we shall see presently that these converts are not the only instances of persons who were disciples, or believers in a certain sense, though they were uninstructed in the first principles of Christianity; and this too even since the propagation of it by the Apostles.

After these things, we are told, *Paul and Silas—came to Corinth§; and Paul reasoned in the synagogue,—and persuaded the Jews and Greeks;—and was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ; and when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, your blood be upon your own heads, &c.* You will be pleased to compare this relation with that of the perverse and unbelieving

§ Acts xviii. 1, &c.

Jews

DISCOURSE IV. 105

Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, already taken notice of.

We have next an account of the conversion of *Justus*, (though it is not particularly set down,) and of *Crispus*, and of *many of the Corinthians*; which contains nothing material to our argument.

But after this we read of an *insurrection made by the Jews against Paul*, and of a charge brought against him before *Gallio*; which has a particular worth our notice. *This fellow*, say they, *persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law**. Now when we recollect, that our blessed Saviour was *circumcised*, and “obedient to the law for “man;” that himself and his Apostles conformed to the religion of their country in all points, and attended divine service in the temple, and in the synagogues; that our Apostle circumcised *Timothy* in pure condescension to the *Jews*; that, in vindication of his innocence, he declared to *Festus*, as

* Acts xviii. 13.

he

he had done before in substance to *Felix*, that *neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple he had offended anything at all*; that the *Mosaic* œconomy totally ceased not before the final destruction of *Jerusalem*, when all disputes concerning circumcision, and the legal rites and observances were happily terminated; when we recollect all this, to which more might be subjoined, it will, I conceive, be impossible to make tolerable sense of the accusation just mentioned, without supposing something to have been superadded to the *Jewish* worship by the Apostles, and first Christians, which gave this *great offence*; and what should this be but the worship of Christians, as such; or, in other words, the adoration of Christ, as God?

We will now proceed to the account which the sacred historian gives us of *Apollos* in the same chapter. * *A certain Jew named Apollos, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was*

* Acts xviii, 24.

instructed

instructed in the way of the Lord; and, being fervent in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace; for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ. This portion of Scripture, though a little abstruse, is replete with matter for our observation. Apollos is here said to have been mighty in the Scriptures; to have been instructed in THE WAY OF THE LORD; and to have spoken, and taught diligently the THINGS OF THE LORD; i. e. beyond all controversy, the things of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless he is only called a Jew; and why, but because he was not baptized in the name of Jesus Christ? He was not a Christian in the full sense of the term, as we understand it;

he

he *knew only the baptism of John*; he knew, as we cannot but suppose from this account of him, he knew *Jesus Christ* to be the prophet, the *Messiah that was to come*, whose way *John* had prepared by preaching the baptism of repentance, &c; but he knew not the whole mystery of godliness, the grand secret of human redemption by the *Son of God*, coexistent with his *Father*, before the foundation of the world. And accordingly, we may safely conclude, that it was with respect to this great mystery, that *Aquila* and *Priscilla* expounded to him the WAY OF GOD more perfectly. If we do not infer from hence, that he expressly and directly preached the great mystery in question to those *Jews* whom he mightily convinced, &c. every difficulty under this head is fairly solved by preceding considerations.

The case of the disciples whom *St. Paul* found at *Ephesus* is very similar to that we have just despatched. *Have ye received the Holy Ghost*, says he, *since ye believed?* And they said unto him, *we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.* † And

† Acts xix. 2, &c.

he said, unto them what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. The passage is not wholly free from obscurity; but we cannot do less than collect from it, that these disciples knew as much of Christ Jesus antecedently to this interview as Apollos did before his acquaintance with Aquila and Priscilla; and consequently, that when they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, they were baptized in the name of a greater person than a prophet; and when the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied, had, like Cornelius and his household, an immediate insight into the profound mystery of the Christian faith. I just add that, in the chapter before us, the name of the Lord Jesus is said to have been magnified;
and

and that the WORD OF THE LORD JESUS, and the WORD OF GOD are different modes of expression which at first sight will be found to import one and the same thing.

But to proceed. I see nothing of consequence enough to our argument to detain us, till we find St. Paul at Miletus, from whence he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the Church. And when they were come to him, says the history, he said unto them, ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you; serving the LORD with all humility; and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you; testifying both to Jews and Greeks, repentance towards GOD, and faith toward our LORD Jesus Christ. And now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me; save that the HOLY GHOST witnesseth in every city, saying, that afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, so that I might finish my course, and the ministry which I have received of the LORD

* Acts xx. 17, &c.

END

Jesus,

DISCOURSE IV. III

Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of GOD. And now I know, that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of GOD, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the HOLY GHOST hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of GOD, which he hath purchased with his OWN BLOOD. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Now if we suppose this Apostolical charge to have been delivered to persons pre-instructed in the mystery of the Gospel, agreeably to our representation of it, i. e. to have been believers in the Holy Trinity, it must be acknowledged to contain words of perspicuity, truth, and soberness; but on every other supposition, must not St. Paul have been thought by his audience to have been indeed beside himself? I would recommend

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the whole of this passage to every judicious and impartial reader's thorough consideration.

We will now attend this great Apostle to *Jerusalem*; where we find him violently attacked by the *Jews which were of Asia, who stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, men of Israel help, this is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people and the law, &c.* The accusation brought here against our Apostle is plainly in substance the same with that alledged by the *Jews of Achaia*, who accused him of *persuading men to worship God contrary to the law*. I shall therefore refer you to what was said on that occasion. Only I will add here, that the observation then made is much confirmed by the circumstance of *St. Paul's purifying himself at Jerusalem with the four men who had a vow on them*, agreeably to the advice before given by the judaizing Christians, and in exact conformity to the *Mosaic constitution*. But if we turn to what the Apostle has to say in his own defence, we shall find

* Acts xxi. 27, &c.

his

his apology to contain an account of his conversion, and of his Apostolical commission in consequence of it; which strengthens much what has been remarked relative to the charge brought against him. It is observable, that St. *Paul* calls himself here a *Jew* in the very same breath almost in which he avows himself a Christian. He admits his hearers to be *zealous towards God, according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers*,† though he plainly intimates all the while that they were erroneously or blindly zealous, or, as he elsewhere expresses it, that their *zeal of God was not according to knowledge*. He does not undervalue or vilify the law, and much less pronounce it to be *void*, and of *none effect*, though he professes himself a preacher of the Gospel. Neither the *Jews* of *Jerusalem*, nor those of *Asia*, could possibly be strangers to the NEW DOCTRINE which he taught under that character: so that we are not at a loss to know the nature and import of the testimony which he bore concerning his Divine Master. Beside, we are to remember, that he was in-

† Acts xxii. 1, &c.

interrupted in the course of his harangue, and precluded from enlarging his speech, or expatiating on his doctrine, (which otherwise perhaps he might have done,) by the clamours and outrage of a giddy and incensed multitude.

We see him next before the *chief priests* and *council*; in which situation he politically takes advantage of the difference of sentiment between them that composed it: the *one part* being *Sadducees*, and *the other Pharisees*. The Apostle openly declares himself a *Pharisee*; in which plea his immediate view was manifestly to his own preservation; though ultimately he had doubtless an eye to the conversion of the most considerable and respectable part of his audience, by tacitly at least referring to the resurrection of *Jesus Christ*, and the important consequences necessarily resulting from it.

In much the same light we may regard his apology for himself before *Felix* in the

† Acts xxiii. 1, &c.

following

following Chapter. Under one article of his accusation he is charged with being *a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes*;† or, as the *Asiatic Jews* had expressed themselves, with *teaching men every where against the law*; or, in the words of the *Jews of Achaia*, with *persuading men to worship God contrary to the law*; and under another article he is traduced as a *mover of Sedition*, and a disturber of the public peace. Now there is something observably dexterous in our Apostle's reply to all this; in which he partly denies the charge, professes his innocence, and defies them to *prove the things whereof they accuse him*; and partly asserts the cause he had espoused, and in general terms acknowledges his Christian principles. In this, as in the preceding case, there is fine address in the Apostle's endeavour to interest his auditors on the side of Christianity, by representing its professors as holding one common tenet with the *straitest* and most popular sect of the *Jewish* religion; while at the same time he was indirectly *preaching through Jesus the*

† Acts xxiv. 5, &c.

resurrection from the dead, and by necessary implication maintaining the great mystery of the Christian Faith. Felix, we find, was far from being unacquainted with at least some of the doctrines of Christianity, and reserved the matter for a farther hearing ; but in the interim he, with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, sent for Paul privately, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.† It does not appear that our Apostle on this occasion discoursed on any one article of faith, strictly and peculiarly Christian. He reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, till this iniquitous governor trembled ; and probably had proceeded to the full display of all evangelical truth, had he not been abruptly dismissed. However, if there be any difficulty here, it is such as affects not our argument in particular ; because the very same difficulty will subsist, whether we suppose that Jesus whom Paul preached to be “ very God of very God,” or to be the Son of God in a secondary sense only, or indeed barely the prophet that was to come into the world.

† Acts xxiv. 24, &c.

Many

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Many of the foregoing remarks may be applied to the defence made afterwards by our Apostle before king *Agrippa and Festus* †. I think it unnecessary therefore to cite it. It will suffice to observe, or rather to repeat, that, asserting the doctrine of the resurrection in general, and particularly that of *Jesus Christ*, St. *Paul* at one and the same time insinuates himself into the good graces of such as were pharisaically disposed; and points to a fact, the admission of which, upon full and dispassionate enquiry, must lead all that heard him, all the *Jews* at least into a train of conclusions, necessarily comprehending the great truths of the Gospel. And that this was a much more judicious mode of conviction than the direct or positive assertion of all, or any of those truths could have been, I presume, I need not stay to prove.

When St. *Paul* some time after this *expounded and testified the kingdom of God to the Jews at Rome, persuading them concerning Jesus both out of the law of Moses, and out of the*

† Acts xxvi. 1, &c.

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prophets, † we cannot say with any precision how much of the whole scheme of Christianity he laid before them. Most probably his usual discretion directed him to deal tenderly with them at first; though when he declared to the unbelieving part of them that the salvation of God was sent unto the Gentiles, the expression has evident reference to that scheme; as, suitably hereto, the history of the Apostolical Acts concludes with an account of his receiving all that came in unto him for two whole years, and preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.

This minute and circumstantial survey of the history of the *Acts of the Apostles*, so far as it is connected with our present subject, will, I apprehend, throw much light upon the same. And it will receive additional lustre from the following consideration: that, as in the Holy Scriptures, so in the writings of the Apostolical Fathers, the leading truths of Christianity are incidentally mentioned, or

† Acts xxviii. 23, 31.

alluded

alluded to, and not systematically, but uniformly taught. The doctrine of these Fathers is delivered in the spirit of simplicity ; it appears plainly to have been the standing doctrine of the Church ; nor is there a single circumstance that will incline us to suspect them of a design to obtrude their own private opinions, or conceits, upon the Christian world. This to me seems demonstrable from a very observable particular ; which is, that in their writings they do not cite all, or the principal texts which are adduced in maintenance of the doctrine of the Trinity, but assert the same in other terms, and in language fully equivalent. They evidently considered it, not as requiring proof, but deserving illustration. *Ignatius*, in the introduction to his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, salutes them “ according to the will of the Father, “ and *Jesus Christ our God*.” The same Father wishes the *Romans* to “ permit him to “ imitate the passion of his God ;” or, of *Christ* his God, as it stands in the Original. In the above-mentioned Epistle to the *Ephesians*, he takes occasion thus to express himself.

self. "There is one physician, both fleshly
 "and spiritual; made and not made; GOD
 "INCARNATE; true life in death; both of
 "Mary and of God; first passible, then im-
 "passible; even *Jesus Christ* our Lord." (n)
 In the conclusion of his Epistle to the *Magne-
 shians*, he enjoins them to "be subject to
 "their bishop, as *Jesus Christ* to the Father,
 "according to the flesh, † and the Apostles
 "both to Christ, and to the Father, and to
 "the Holy Ghost." This inversion is a very
 remarkable one. In his Epistle to *Polycarp*
 he exhorts him "to consider the times, and
 "expect him who is above all time, eternal,
 "invisible, &c." Were there occasion, much
 more to the same purpose might be extracted
 from this venerable Father,

Polycarp in his Epistle to the *Philipians*,
 wishes them to be "subject to the Priests,
 "&c. as unto God and Christ."

In St. *Clement's* first epistle to the *Corinth-
 ians* these passages occur. "The sceptre of

† Romans i. 3.

"the

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“ the majesty of GOD, our Lord *Jesus Christ*,
 “ came not in the shew of pride,” &c. &c.
 The second section of the same epistle proceeds in the terms following. “ Ye were
 “ all of you humble-minded, &c. desiring
 “ rather to be subject than to govern, &c.
 “ being content with the portion GOD had
 “ dispensed to you, and hearkening diligently to HIS word, ye were enlarged
 “ in your bowels, having HIS SUFFERINGS
 “ always before your eyes.” This passage is not unfamiliar to part of St, *Paul*’s discourse at *Miletus* to the elders of the church of *Ephesus*, before submitted to your consideration. Let us see now what this Father says in his other epistle to the Corinthians. The exordium of it is this—“ Brethren, we ought
 “ so to think of *Jesus Christ* as of GOD &c.” In the third paragraph he quotes these words of our blessed Saviour ; *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father*. But, continues he, “ Wherein
 “ must we confess him ? Namely, in doing
 “ those things which he saith, &c. by worshipping him, not with our lips only, but
 “ with

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“with all our heart, &c. for *HE* faith in *Isaiab*,
 “*This people honoureth me with their lips, but*
 “&c.” In conformity with this good Father’s
 idea, we may ask, after the manner of *St. Paul*, is *Jesus Christ* the God of the *New Testament* only? Is he not also of the *Old*?
Yea, of the Old also. In the conclusion of
 the epistle, *St. Clement* exhorts the *Corinthians*
 to be vigilant, &c. “because we know
 “not the day of God’s appearing;” *i. e.* un-
 doubtedly, the day when we *must appear be-*
fore the judgmentseat of Christ.

It is true, as the learned translator acknow-
 ledges, this second Epistle, was neither held
 in so much reverence by the ancients, nor
 is so generally received among the moderns,
 as the first; and, it is certain, *St. Jerome*,
Photius, and *Archbishop Usher* after them,
 concur in endeavouring to represent it as a
 spurious production. But I am apt to think
 every reader will be satisfied with what the
 learned Prelate has advanced in its defence;
 though, were the point still really contro-
 vertible, as the ground of the objections,
 raised

raised by these illustrious personages, does not lie in the doctrine so explicitly contained in it, and at the same time so consonant to the sentiments of the apostolical fathers, I see no manner of necessity for retracting these quotations. Whoever the author might be, we have his clear sense of the matter.

The charge of credulity brought against many of the Fathers by a late celebrated Author, with vehemency of zeal, and in the dialect of virulence, even admitting it to be well founded, cannot justly be thought to affect in the least the validity of these primitive and plain testimonies to the great truths of the Gospel, as they *are most surely believed among us*. There is not, I am confident, one circumstance to colour a charge of this nature against the Fathers from whom we have been drawing our evidence, except that of the *Phœnix*, by which, as we shall see, St. *Clement* illustrates the doctrine of the resurrection. And ample satisfaction will be given on that head in its proper place. (o)

To

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To these testimonies we might subjoin those of *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Irenæus*, and a number of others; the weight of whose collected evidence will be found infinitely to preponderate all that has perversely been alledged to its discredit from writers of a subsequent date, and minor authority. (p) This in due time will fully appear.

Now, if in all this doctrine we can see nothing like a formulary, or system, we see however from whence *confessions of faith* may reasonably be supposed to have originated, and by what at this day they may be most justly defended. Supposing the first rule of faith to have been purely the baptismal form; or, agreeing with *Dr. Sykes*, that the “very short Creed which at first
“was deemed sufficient to entitle men to baptism, was no other than a faith in God the
“Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
“and in *Jesus Christ*, his Son our Lord, and
“in the *Holy Ghost*,” even admitting this, we cannot surely have recourse to better or sounder authority than that which has been
laid

laid before you, in order to know exactly what *this faith* implies. It will be hard indeed if the Apostles, and these Apostolical Fathers, should be all along teaching heresy, while they perpetually and earnestly, though not formally or methodically, complain of, and expatiate against it.

But I have yet farther to observe, that the sense of antiquity, and the faith of the primitive Church, may be inferred from such circumstantial evidence as has never, that I know of, been professedly produced, but yet, I trust, will be allowed to come little if at all short of demonstration.

The infamous reproach which was cast upon the whole Christian name by its first enemies, is a circumstance of a particular aspect to our purpose. Christianity was called emphatically **THE ATHEISM.**(*q*) Now I own I cannot help considering this equally horrid and ridiculous imputation as necessarily importing the primitive Christians to have worshipped *Jesus Christ* as **ONE** with the Father,
or

or as “very God of very God” from all eternity. For nothing less than such worship will account for the charge either from *Jews* or *Gentiles*. It might naturally be considered by both as a kind of dethroning of the ONE SUPREME GOD. But every modern unbeliever will readily agree with me, that the idea of inferiority and delegation, &c. is far from being irreconcilable with *Jewish* tenets, or with known principles of Polytheism. (r)

According to the *Apostolical constitutions*, as we learn from an eminent author, it was customary for the priest, after *amen* solemnly pronounced by the communicants in the holy sacrament, to cry out with a loud voice *τα αγια τοις αγιοις*—*Holy things belong to holy persons*; upon which the people answered, *There is one Holy, one Lord Jesus Christ*.

The same writer acquaints us from *Vegetius*, an heathen author, who flourished in the time of the younger *Valentinian*, that Christians in a military capacity were used
to

to swear by *God*, *Christ*, and the *Holy Spirit*, and the *Majesty* of the Emperor, which next to God is to be honoured, &c. *

In his *Dissertation on Epictetus*, *Arrian* (as Bishop *Wilkins* observes) “ assures us, “ that in his time, (which was about an “ hundred and twenty years after Christ,) it “ was an usual form in the prayers of the “ heathen to say *Κυrie ελεησον*—*Lord have mercy upon us* ; whereby they did acknowledge the *unity* of God, says his Lordship ; “ which clause, he adds, is thought to have “ been from that usage taken into the Liturgy of Christians.”

Now, if this be admitted, I would remark, that as the title of *Lord* confessedly belongs to our Saviour, the Christians may fairly be supposed, in their triple form of ejaculatory address,—*Lord, have mercy upon us ; Christ, have mercy upon us ; Lord, have mercy us ;* to invoke *Christ the Lord*, as supreme *God* : or if by *Lord* we are in the first

* Cave's Prim. Christ. p. 86. Echard's Roman History, Vol. III. p. 2.

and

and third petition to understand *God the Father*, still we must be presumed in the intermediate one to address the *Son* as *equal* to the Father; because we shall else be absurd enough to invoke the *supreme God* and a *subordinate being* with the same fervour, and as it were in the same instant. You will see the argument these pious ejaculations furnish us with, whether we do or do not credit the account of *Arrian*. †

In confirmation of what has been offered, I desire to add one or two more facts, which, if I mistake not, have more weight in them than is commonly apprehended; as, for instance, the appointment of the *Lord's day*; and the style or title *Κυριον τα οικια* by which churches were in the primitive times distinguished. For can we do less in common reason than worship him with the *supreme God*, and as the *supreme God*, to whose particular honour one day in the week is for ever to be *kept holy*; on whose particular account the most sacred observances of religion were trans-

† See Wilkins on Nat. Relig. B. I. ch. 8. p. 42.

ferred

ferred from the *seventh* day of the week to the *first*; and whose peculiar house is now the only *house of prayer for all people*?

I shall conclude this discourse with reminding you of a circumstance, if possible, still more decisive: I mean the *Unitarian* doctrine which is so copiously, and so emphatically inculcated in the *Koran* of *Mahomet*.* Of the person of *Jesus Christ*, in his prophetic character, this arch impostor speaks in terms the most respectable. “God, “says he, gave miracles to *Jesus*, the son “of *Mary*, and strengthened him with the “Holy Spirit, &c. *Jesus* said in the cradle, “verily I am the servant of God. This was “*Jesus* the son of *Mary*, (s) the word of “truth, &c. Verily God promiseth thee a “son, named *John*, (says the angel *Gabriel* “to *Zechariah*, according to the *Koran*,) “who shall bear witness to the WORD, “which cometh from God, an honourable “person, chaste, and one of the righteous “prophets.” To do honour to the author of

* See Passim.

Christianity in this capacity, *Mahomet* positively asserts, that “ they (the *Jews*) slew
 “ him not, neither crucified him ; but that
 “ he was represented by one in his likeness.
 “ They did not really kill him, says he, but
 “ God took him up unto himself.”

But with respect to our Lord's Divinity, or equality with the Father, you have, among a thousand parallel ones, the sentiments following. “ They (viz. the Christians) say,
 “ God hath begotten children ; God forbid.
 “ It is not meet for God that he should have
 “ any son ; God forbid. Blessed be he that
 “ hath revealed the *Forkan*, (*Koran*,) to
 “ whom belongeth the kingdom of heaven
 “ and earth ; who hath begotten no issue,
 “ and hath no partner in his kingdom, &c.
 “ Yet have they taken other Gods besides
 “ him, which have created nothing, but are
 “ themselves created, &c. *Jesus* is no other
 “ than a servant whom we favoured with the
 “ gift of prophecy, &c. When *Jesus* came
 “ with evident miracles, he said, now am I
 “ come unto you with wisdom, and to ex-
 “ plain

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“ plain unto you part of those things
 “ concerning which ye disagree ; wherefore
 “ fear God, and obey me. Verily God is
 “ my Lord, and your Lord ; wherefore wor-
 “ ship him. He is God, besides whom there
 “ is no God, &c. Far be God exalted above
 “ the idols which they associate with
 “ him. The 112th. ch. of the *Koran* is
 “ entitled *the declaration of God’s Unity*, and
 “ the whole runs thus : Say God is one God ;
 “ (*t*) the eternal God ; he begetteth not,
 “ neither is he begotten ; and there is not
 “ any like unto him. In the 6th. ch. is the
 “ following question : How should he have
 “ issue, since he hath no consort ? ”

That these carnal sentiments, this gross
 language, (the language of infidels and scof-
 fers every day,) is directly levelled, not at a
new or *strange* thing ; not at a peculiar tenet
 of a few enthusiasts ; or a particular sect of
 Christians ; but at the leading article, the
 fundamental principle of our religion, may
 be affirmed in utter defiance of the united
 powers of effrontery and equivocation. The

K 2

doctrine

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doctrine of the Trinity was most indisputably the standing doctrine of the Christian Church at the time this false prophet broached his imposture, in the beginning of the seventh century. All these considerations combined, demolish in a moment the several forts of infidelity, in early corruptions, in Monastic superstition, in Gothic barbarism, Scholastic subtilty, and Papal innovation. (v)

D I S-

DISCOURSE V.

I J O H N V, part of verse 20,

This ‡ is the true God.

HAVING, I trust, already beyond all reasonable doubt ascertained the absolute Divinity of Jesus Christ, *by many infallible proofs* from holy writ, and by other arguments of a nature little less demonstrative, I scruple not to set the words just read to you in the front of the present discourse, as plainly declarative of this great doctrine, though, singly and separately considered, they may not, on a critical review of the whole verse, be altogether unliable to cavil, or, if

‡ HE is the true God—according to some versions, and perhaps defensible ones. See Webster; and Scot's *Christian Life*, Vol. II, p. 558. See Whitby in loc.

K 3

you

you please, to exception. And I hope very much to strengthen what has been advanced by shewing the repugnancy of anti-trinitarian principles to the genius and design of the Christian dispensation; or, in other words, by proving that, if we solely or chiefly regard our blessed Saviour under any character inferior to that of the *true God*, our highest ideas will come infinitely short both of the dignity of his Person, and the nature and end of his Commission.

By affecting the common appellation of *Unitarians*, modern unbelievers, as well the followers of *Socinus* as the disciples of *Arius*, (who again may be ranged under many more classes than one,) appear in some sort to be ashamed of the leaders of their respective heresies, and to desert the captains under whose banners they fight. But be their several motives hereunto what they may, (tho' indeed they are obvious enough,) it will suffice, without concerning myself with particular conceits, to take into consideration the two following general persuasions:

First,

First, that of those who regard our Saviour merely as a Legislator, or teacher of morality by divine commission : and,

Secondly, that of those who profess themselves *both almost and altogether such as we are*, his coequality with the Father excepted.

With a view to the confutation of *Socinian* principles, I would observe in the first place, that the title of Legislator, or Lawgiver, is by no means that by which *Jesus Christ* is distinguished, or particularly described, either in the *old* or *new Testament*. The great characters of *Wonderful, Counsellor, Prince of peace, the Sun of righteousness,* the Lord our righteousness;† the Messiah, the chosen of God,‡ the Christ of God; of Mediator and Advocate; of Saviour, Redeemer, and High-Priest; of Son of David, Son of God, Son of the Blessed,§ Lamb of God, Lord of glory, || Prince of life, Author and Captain of our Salvation; *** these characters, and more that might be enumerated, import little or nothing of legislation,

* Mal. iv. 2.

† Jer. xxiii. 6.

‡ Luke xxiii. 35.

§ Mar. xiv. 61.

|| 1 Cor. ii. 8.

** Heb. ii. 10. v. 9.

but are almost wholly significative of the personal quality of our Saviour, and of his own moral excellence, and of the value and efficacy of his sacrifice. He was, it is true, *a teacher sent from God* ; but he was not sent primarily in the capacity of a *teacher*. To instruct the world in righteousness was not the grand and ultimate, but merely a subordinate end of his appearance ; and indeed a necessary consequence of it.

Let us see then, in the second place, what the Scripture, and he himself declares to have been the more immediate purpose for which he was *made flesh, and dwelt among us*. *To this end was I born* ; * says he, *and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth*. Again ; *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*. †. Again ; *I must work the work of him that sent me*. ‡ *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*. § *He hath anointed me to preach the*

* John xviii. 37.

† Matt. ix. 13.

† Ibid. iii. 16.

§ John ix. 4.

Gospel

*Gospel to the poor ; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty those that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. Once more ; I must preach the kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent.** What the sum and substance of our Saviour's preaching was, will be remembered presently ; and meantime we shall find his Apostles delivering themselves in language corresponfive to the above. *The law was given by Moses, says St. John, but grace and peace came by Jesus Christ.†* In this was manifested the love of God towards us, says the same Apostle, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that he loved us ; and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.‡ Again ; *When the fulness of time was come, says St. Paul, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.§* This is a faithful saying, says the same Apostle, and worthy of

* Luke iv. 18. 43.

† John iv. 9, 10.

‡ John i. 17.

§ Gal. iv. 4.

all

all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And to adduce only one passage more, the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.†* The question then will be how, or in what manner, we are taught to live thus; or, in other words, what we are to understand by *Christ's* religion, regarding it as a system of morality.

I must beg leave then, in the third place, to put you in mind, that Christianity is not a *new* law, properly speaking, but a new edition, if I may so say, or promulgation of the *old*; agreeably to the express declaration of its Divine Author, who assures us that he *came not to destroy the moral law, or the prophets, but to fulfil both.‡* The fact is, *Christ* blotted out the hand writing of carnal ordinances, § and took out of the way the whole ceremonial of Judaism, but left every thing

* 1 Tim. i. 15.

† Matt. v. 17.

‡ Tit. ii. 11, &c.

§ Col. ii. 14.

which

which was intrinsically *holy*, and *just*, and *good* in the law, in its full force and obligation. He was the *mediator of a better covenant*; he laid the foundation of a new system of faith, and a purer mode of worship; but he repealed not a single law of *Moses*, that had any thing in it properly of a moral and binding nature. A religion of this sort supposed and required reformation in the lives of its professors; and accordingly our blessed Lord, in his excellent discourse on the mount, and in other places, enforces the import, and explains the obligation of many of the precepts of the *Jewish* lawgiver; the full sense and genuine meaning of which had been perverted by the false glosses and misconstructions of later ages, and particularly of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. We find him perpetually upbraiding these with their substitutions of oral tradition in the room of the written word of God; and with absurdly and impiously *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*.* In these instances he nobly rescues the Scripture from human cor-

* Matt. xv. 9.

ruptions;

ruptions; and faithfully discharges the important office, not of a maker or prescriber of law, but of a doctor or expounder of it.

Suitably to all this, our Lord cites and refers to the law of *Moses* upon all occasions. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* † viz. the commandments contained in the *Mosaic* decalogue, was his answer to the person who had asked him, *what he should do that he might have eternal life?* When the lawyer, by way of tempting him, put this question to him, *which is the great commandment in the law?* ‡ He mentions those two capital ones, which, though not literally to be found among the *ten*, virtually comprehended them all, namely, the *love of God and of our neighbour*; at once satisfying and confounding his insidious querist with this apposite and decisive reply. Accordingly when he told his disciples, that he gave them a *new commandment* § in his particular injunction to them to *love one another*, he

† Matt. xix. 17.

§ John xiii. 34.

‡ Ibid. xxii. 35.

was

was not teaching a *new doctrine*, or bringing *strange things to their ears*, this duty being evidently implied in the *love* of our *neighbour*, but only injoining a duty, by the practice of which his followers ought to be more especially distinguished; to which they had inducements of an extraordinary nature; to which they were bound by ties and considerations peculiarly Christian, and by reverence for his astonishingly great example, who so *loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood.**

In perfect consistence with this, the Apostles *preached the Gospel*, after their *Lord and Master* had left the world, and was *gone to his Father*. They taught Gospel truths; they insisted on, (St. Paul more especially,) they rejoiced, they gloried in their deliverance from *bondage under weak and beggarly elements*;† they exulted in the abolition of the ceremonial law, as a mere temporary establishment, and shadowy institution; but at the same time they regarded the moral law

* Rev. i. 5.

† Gal. iv. 9.

as of inviolable authority, and a complete standard of conduct still. When the Apostle just now named exposes the extreme folly of such transgressors of the law as stood self-condemned; or complains of the rigour of its requisitions; or declares the impossibility of yielding meritorious obedience *to it*, and consequently of obtaining Salvation *under it*, its subsistence and obligation are supposed beyond all possible contradiction. That it *could not make the comers thereunto perfect*, was an argument of its own intrinsic perfection. The same great Apostle, pressing upon his *Roman* converts the duties of *brotherly love*, and universal charity, recites almost all the commandments of the second table; and subjoins that comprehensive precept of *Moses* just now mentioned, which he no doubt considered as inclusive of every evangelical precept, even that of *loving our enemies, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. St. James calls this very precept, this great social principle, the *royal law*; † and when he argues against the folly and presumption of a partial

† James ii. 8.

obedience

obedience to the divine commandments, and a commuting as it were for iniquities, rests his argument wholly in that supreme authority by which the law of *Moses* was enacted: *be that said, do not commit adultery, said also, do not kill.*† In short, both our Lord and his Apostles inculcated, and enlarged upon many things of practical importance, as circumstances admitted, and occasions required; but they taught nothing of this kind but what was reducible to the *Mosaic* institutions, or to some general head of *Jewish*, or natural morality. I add of natural morality; because the law of nature, the law of *Moses*, and the law of *Christ* are, in point of morality, one and the same; the latter illustrating, explaining, enforcing, and recommending the two former, but neither *adding to*, nor *diminishing from* them. For the *reason* or *fitness* of things is absolutely unalterable; and whatever is in its own nature morally good or evil, has always been so, and will for ever continue so to be. The moral law which was once written upon *tables of stone* was origi-

† James ii. 11.

nally

nally engraved upon the *fleshly tables* of man's *heart*.(u) To maintain or to imagine otherwise, is to *charge God foolishly*; and to suppose both the law and the Gospel to prescribe a practice in some instances unnatural and unreasonable. St. *Paul's* descriptions of the gross ignorance and depravity of the heathen world are equally animated and just.† But notwithstanding this, the irradiations of reason and conscience are sometimes beautifully visible amidst this *blackness* of spiritual *darkness*. We might extract from the writings of *Pagan* authors, philosophers and others, of different times, and in different places, a moral system, against which, collectively taken, should lie no fair exception; and produce from them sentiments finely coinciding with the most exalted principles, and most refined doctrines of Christianity.

In these writings we find the purest piety, the exactest justice, the truest benevolence, the firmest fortitude, the noblest disinterestedness, and the meekest patience, most explicitly taught, and earnestly inculcated. (w)

† Rom. i. 21, &c.

Tully

Tully divides the duty of man as we do at this day ; viz. into that which is due, first, to God ; secondly, to our neighbour ; and thirdly, to ourselves. *Hæc (philosophia) nos primum ad Deorum cultum, deinde ad jus hominum, quod situm est in generis humani societate, tum ad modestiam, magnitudinemque animi erudit.* *

The golden rule of equity, *whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, &c.* (Matt. vii. 12.) † obtained, as many have observed, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and was delivered by them as well negatively as positively, and under various modes of expression. That to intend wickedness is to commit it, is the express doctrine of *Seneca*, as quoted by *Le-Clerc* in his note on the 12th Chapter of the 4th. book of *Grotius* ; and, which is still more remarkable, he instances in cases of lust and sensuality :

Incesta est etiam sine stupro, quæ cupit stuprum.

Even so great a debauchee as *Ovid* speculates well upon this subject :

* Tusc. Q. l. I. 26.

† See Whitby in loc.

*Quæ quia non licuit, non facit, illa facit.
 Ut jam servaris bene corpus, adultera mens est;
 Omnibus exclusis intus adulter erit. Ibid.*

This is precisely the morality of our Divine Legislator. Forgiveness of enemies, &c. is a great point of morality which the heathens were far from being unacquainted with. According to *Plutarch*, it was a prayer of the *Lacedæmonians*, that the gods would enable them to bear injuries. And we are informed by the same great biographer, that *Dion* maintained true philosophy to consist, not in shewing kindness to friends, but in forgiving injuries, and pardoning offences. *Menander* is clearly of the same opinion in the following fine passage ;

Ουτος κρατιστος ες' ανηρ, ω Γοργια,
 Ος τις αδικεισθαι πλης' επισταται Βροτων.*

Some of the philosophers argued against present solicitude, and the *taking* too much *thought for the morrow*, precisely as our Saviour does in his discourse on the mount. A philosopher, or wise man, ought not to be anxious about these things, *viz. food, &c. &c.*

* See Le Clerc's Note above referred to.

διδουκας

δοῖκας μὴ ἔχει τροφὰς αὐρίου—is a sentence quoted by Dr. *Whitby* in his note on v. 25. Ch. 6. of St. *Matthew*. The following sentiment of *Plato*, καὶ φωνὰ καὶ ῥήνων λόγων βαρὺ αἰσθησιμῶν,* is almost a counterpart to our Saviour's—*of every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account at the day of judgment*. Tully's notion of the *servitude* of a sinner quadrates exactly with the doctrine of our blessed Lord, and of St. *Paul* after him. *Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*, † says the former; *his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness*, ‡ says the latter; and says *Cicero*, *si servitus sit obedientia fracti animi, et arbitrio carentis suo, quis neget omnes imbrobos esse servos?* § On the other hand, *Deo parere libertas est*, says *Seneca*, in the spirit of a Christian, and the language of the Church; in one of the *Collects* of which, God's service is called *perfect freedom*. The same philosopher represents the Deity as a most beneficent Being who *maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just*

* See Plato de Leg. l. 4.

† John viii. 34.

‡ Rom. vi. 16.

§ Tully's Par. 5.

and on the unjust; ecce sceleratis, says he, *sol oritur, et piratis patent maria*.* And, to mention only one particular more, he directs us in another place to consider human afflictions as the corrections of a father for our spiritual benefit. God, he says, *sicut severus pater durius educat*; † which is almost literally the sentiment of the Apostle. ‡ The frailty of human nature, our radical disinclination to virtue, the necessity of propitiation, and our want of extraneous assistance as well as of personal resolution, for the purpose of a good life, are points often intimated, and as often insisted upon by *Pagan* writers. The *nitimur in vetitum*—of the poet was a sort of standing *thesis* with many. The multitude of heathen sacrifices shews a consciousness of guilt, and a solicitude for atonement. Their sense of the need of a divine blessing on their endeavours in general, appears sufficiently from their undertaking nothing of moment, whether of a public or

* Sen. de Ira. l. 4. c. 26. de vit. beat. 15.

† See Wilkins. B. 1. c. 16.

‡ Heb. xii. 7, &c.

private

private concern, without the previous observance of certain rites and ceremonies; or, as *Pliny* expresses himself in the introduction to his *panegyric* on *Trajan*, *sine deorum immortalium ope, consilio, et honore*. It may not be easy to ascertain what we are to understand by the *Dæmon*, or the *Genius*, which, by his own account attended *Socrates*; but it is certain the notion of *good and evil genii* prevailed much in the heathen world. In the following lines, the warmth of divine infusion in the human breast is beautifully expressed by *Ovid*;

Est Deus in nobis; agitante calescimus illo:

Impetus hic sacrae semina mentis habet. †

The necessity of supernatural impulse to the regulation of human conduct has always been acknowledged. *Tully* says somewhere, *Nemo unquam vir magnus sine divino afflatu fuit*; and *Homer* affirms by the mouth of *Polydamas*, that God is the dispenser of all our talents, or endowments whatsoever:

Ἀλλω μὲν γὰρ ἔδωκε θεὸς πολεμικὰ ἔργα,

Ἀλλω δ' ἔχ. ἔχ. *Il. lib. xiii. v. 730. et seq.*

† Sententiæ illuf. ex *Ovid*. See *Cumberland* on the defects of heathen Deism. p. 21.

L 3

Correspondently

Correspondently with all this, philosophers have represented the difficulty of persevering in a virtuous course, under the very same metaphor which is used by our Blessed Saviour himself. *Cebes* affirms, that there is a *little gate* *Θύρα τις μικρά** at the entrance of the path that leads to happiness &c. and that it is a path which few walk in ; in which *πανν ολιγοι πορευονται*.

When we consider these sentiments and principles independently and separately from whatever is erroneous, inconsistent, or extravagant in heathen authors, we can do no less than reverence them as doing credit to human nature in its most depraved state ; as so many efforts of reason nobly struggling to emerge from a vast abyss of ignorance and impurity. The grand use and advantage of the Gospel, regarded as a moral scheme, is not so *much* that things are uniformly taught therein, and delivered in consummate purity, as that they are taught with proper authority, by a Legislator † from heaven, and under sanctions the most efficacious imaginable. In short, the

* See Whitby on Matt. 7. 13.

† See Locke's Reasonab. of Christian. p. 269.

Christian

Christian religion stands particularly discriminated from all other institutions by the personal pre-eminence of its Author, and by the transcendent graciousness, importance, and splendor of the dispensation.

If we regard our Saviour under any character inferior to that of the true God ; at least if we regard him merely as a man, or as a law-giver, we shall find few or no marks of that originality by which the founders of all persuasions, religious or philosophical, are distinguished. As a prophet, he was *like unto Moses*, according to the express prediction of the latter ; as a worker of *miracles*, he stood supereminent, but not single ; as a teacher, or instructor, he followed precedents ; his apologues and allegories were agreeable to the oriental mode, and many of his parables were borrowed from the *Jews* ; * even that excellent form of prayer which he taught his disciples was almost entirely taken out of the *Jewish* liturgies ; and the sacraments which “ he ordained in his

* See Whitby on Matt. 6. v. 9.—13. v. 10.

“Church” were grafted upon a *Jewish* stock; *baptism* being a rite which the *Jews* observed with the exactness of superstition ; and that of the *Lord's Supper* being transferr'd from their practice of *eating bread and drinking wine*, in an eucharistical way, at the celebration of the *Passover*. * The great Apostle to the *Hebrews* seems to set the matter before us in the clearest light. *He*, says he, *that despised Moses's law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses : of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy,—(not who hath broken the law of the Gospel, but) who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath accounted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the spirit of grace.* † Immoralities, it is true, and those of the grossest kind, are implied in these words ; but they are such as are most provokingly aggravated by singular contumaciousness ; and the least that can be inferred from this passage is, that a *greater than*

* See Patrick's Disc. on Baptism. p. 8. Allix's Reflect. V. 2. p. 177. Potter's Ch. Government. † Heb. x. 28.

Moses

Moses is here. How does *Socinianism* shrink before such considerations as these !

But it is little material which of two errors may be most plausible, when both are equidistant from the centre of truth. Our blessed Saviour is no more *half-God* than he is *all man*, if I have leave so to express myself ; nor will *Arianism* fix a firmer basis of faith by its chimerical expedient of a secondary worship, and a gradation of Deity. For this at best will be found to be neither more nor less than *Paganism* improved, and contracted within a smaller circle. It must be equally idolatrous, equally injurious to the honour of the Supreme Being, to acknowledge *Gods many*, or *Gods few*, or only one God *besides* him. Infinite almost as the number of subaltern deities was among the Heathens, there is no doubt but the wisest of them at least acted nearly upon *Arian* principles ; viz. under a persuasion of the existence and properties, and with a reservation of the prerogatives of the one Supreme God. According to universal tradition

tion, the notion of a supreme power, a self-existent, independent Being, a first cause of all things, prevailed more or less every where in the world.* The doctrine of divine Supremacy was no secret even among people whose religious rites and usages were silly and extravagant enough to render them obnoxious to the scorn and laughter of mankind, thro' all ages. The superstitions of the *Ægyptians* were gross and numberless; and their worship of the meanest animals, and indeed of things inanimate, was beyond measure contemptible. And yet they had an opinion with respect to God, that erred even on the side of spirituality. For they held that he is not to be addressed by mortals so much as in vocal prayer.† This is at once an instance of strong belief, and mistaken veneration. The great attributes of the Deity are asserted by writers of all sorts, by philosophers, and by poets, and in terms of the fullest significance. His spirituality, omnipotence, omnipresence, independence, invisibility, and incomprehensible nature, are

* See Shuckford's Sac. and Prof. Hist. connec. Vol. 1. B. 5.

† See Parker on Idolatry, p. 43.

set in a very strong light by *Pagan* authors ; particularly by *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, *Anaxagoras*, *Cicero*, *Porphyry*, *Seneca*, *Homer*, and the *Greek Dramatists*. (x) I have not time or occasion to produce my authorities here. The truth is, many *goodly pearls* of speculative doctrine are to be found amongst the rubbish of *Pagan* antiquity ; and they strikingly contrast an enormous *farrago* of traditional error, radical prejudice, vulgar folly, and popular superstition. They are the sentiments of minds that seem to have been enlightened beyond the conceptions of the bulk of mankind. If we separate the carnal *dross* from the spiritual *bullion* of heathenism, we shall be able to extract a body of theoretic divinity from the old *Pagans*, little if at all inferior to the finest *unitarian* system. In short, if *Arianism* be not strictly *polytheism*, it is not much better ; it is maintainable only on much the same ground, and by a similar mode of reasoning.

Surely a *Tully*, or a *Plato*, had as admissible an apology for his conformity to idolatrous services,

services, in general prepossession, and national establishment, as the modern unbeliever has for his secondary worship, in any distinction he may affect to make between *Pagan* and *Arian* theology. For unless the holy Scriptures direct us in the plainest manner, and with all possible cautiousness of expression, NOT to honour the Son even as we honour the Father ; if they do not clearly and uniformly distinguish between *Jesus Christ*, and the *Holy Ghost*, and the *Supreme God*, in point of *nature*, or *essence* ; or, in other words, if *Arianism* has not a most firm foundation in the sacred pages, and in apostolical and primitive worship, we cannot honestly resolve it into any thing but the pride of human reason, fabricating its own theory, and *resisting the Holy Ghost*. Now the invalidity of its pretences has, I persuade myself been sufficiently shewn already ; and therefore we are to reject its hypothesis, together with that of *Socinianism*, as respectively aiming to establish *another doctrine* than *that* we have *received* ; as fundamentally erroneous, and absolutely repugnant to the genius and spirit of Christianity.

But

But because the *strength* of true believers may be said in some sense to be *made perfect in the weakness* of their antagonists, as a giant appears to most advantage when confronted with a pigmy, I shall take my next opportunity for your conviction, that the *anti-trinitarian* cause has its chief support in disingenuous evasion, flimsy sophistry, or wilful misconstruction; and neither is nor can be defended from the *strong holds* of reason, or by *weapons* from the armory of Sacred Writ.

DIS-

DISCOURSE VI.

G A L. Chap. I. part of verse 7.

*There be some that trouble you, and would
pervert the Gospel of Christ.*

THE Apostle, as appears from the argument he prosecutes throughout this epistle, had, in the words just read, an eye to those *Jewish* converts who were so zealously attached to the *Mosaic* ritual, the *law* of their *fathers*, that they could not endure to see it superseded by the more liberal, the more pure, the more sublime principles of the Gospel. But I shall avail myself of the latitude my text admits; not hesitating to regard as *perverters* of the *Gospel*, those heretics of different sorts, whose unfairness, or imbecility

imbecility of allegation, construction, and exception on the part of infidelity, I stand engaged to make appear in the following discourse.

That pride, or prepossession should be tenacious of any opinion however strange, or however extravagant, will be no matter of surprize to us when we recollect, that almost every thing which we see not by immediate intuition, or which is not capable of a strictly mathematical demonstration, may be started, and upheld for a subject of dispute. It is possible indeed, and it sometimes happens, that men shall reason injudiciously and inconclusively even in a righteous cause; and truth may suffer, or rather be supposed to suffer by precipitance of passion, or inadvertency of zeal. This before now has been the case with the cause before us. A pious wish to confirm the doctrine of the *Trinity* by producing multifarious evidence, and heaping proof upon proof; (y) or an earnest endeavour to elucidate a point, the knowlege of which is too wonderful and excellent for
the

the attainment of human wisdom, by metaphysical nicety, and the sagacity of abstract speculation; (z) or by studied similitudes, and artificial allusions, to bring it nearer to our conceptions; all this has been hurtful to the interest of religion, and *given occasion to the enemy* to ridicule, if not to *blaspheme*. Erroneous constructions, and misapplication of particular passages, betray too often a want of moderation, or of skill in interpreters. But, all this while, a charge of unskilfulness, or of prevarication, or of perverseness, or of presumption, or of insincerity, or of intemperance, will come with a very ill grace from our adversaries; and we are to look on the side of infidelity for the most visible signs of weakness, and the surest tokens of conscious distress. I am apt to believe, you will soon be convinced by a few select particulars that this is not arbitrarily, or groundlessly said.

I shall hardly be called upon to apologize for freedoms I shall be obliged to take with authors who are no more. It will be acknowledged, with respect to every *Arian* &c.

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of

of note, that, to mischievous purpose, he *being dead yet speaketh*. To proceed then.

That when we are baptized *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, we are baptized in the name of three Persons, and of three Divine Persons, and of three equally Divine Persons,* seems not to be more evident from Scripture than from the reason of the thing. For else we are baptized in the name of *two* Persons and *one* virtue or quality, &c. which is a notion palpably ridiculous; or we are baptized in the name of *three* Persons, betwixt the *first* and *two latter* of which there is an infinite disparity; (there being no medium between God and a creature;) which is a supposition not less ridiculous. And, in fact, the *Baptismal Form* is so strong, that heretics have found themselves under a necessity of changing it; or of explaining it away; some baptizing into the *death of Christ*; some *in the name of the uncreated God, and in the name of the created Son, and in the name of the sancti-*

* See Lightfoot's Harm. of the N. Test. Sect. 92. p. 273.
fying

fying Spirit, created by the created Son. Dr. Clarke, to whom *Arianism* is under great obligations, writes as follows. *We are baptized, says he, into the profession of that belief, and an obligation to the practice of that religion, which God the Father has revealed and taught by the Son, and confirmed and established by the Holy Ghost.* If this is extrication, what is difficulty? †

The same learned author paraphrases the introduction to St. *John's* Gospel in the following words: “ With God the Father, the
 “ FIRST, the SUPREME cause and original of
 “ all things, there existed *before all ages* that
 “ *Divine Person* whose name is called the
 “ *Word of God*, the *only begotten of the Fa-*
 “ *ther*, the *brightness of his glory*, and by
 “ ineffable COMMUNICATION of divine
 “ power and perfections, the *express image of*
 “ *his Person.*” The fine artifice of this paraphrase will escape a common, or a cursory reader. I guess, Dr. C— would never have consented to the least alteration in this pas-

† See a late work entitled *An Elucidation of the Unity*, &c. p. 59. where this *Form* is treated with equal freedom.

sage, or have permitted us only for *ineffable* to read *eternal*. The phrase—*before all ages*—is designedly ambiguous; and imports merely an acknowledgement of the impossibility of fixing the date of the generation of the *Son of God*.

*In the beginning was the word,** says St. John; i. e. (if we will hearken to the Socinians,) *Jesus Christ* existed when the Gospel was first preached by *John the Baptist*; or, if you please, by himself. *The word was with God*; i. e. *was known to God, and to God only*; or, *was with God, by being taken up into heaven to receive his prophetic commission*, agreeably to a parallel exposition of another passage, which will be presently noticed, and both by the same interpreters. *The word was God, viz.* in a secondary or derivative sense; in a sense implying *Christ's* priority and superiority to all other creatures; so that if we take this whole sentence together, *the word was with God, and the word was God*, the term *God* is to be understood in the proper sense in the first clause, and in an improper and inferior sense in the second: as Dr. C.

* John i. 1.

and

DISCOURSE VI. 165

and others, according to a judicious writer's remark, *ingeniously* expound this passage !

*No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven ; ** are the words of our Lord himself in the same Gospel. Perhaps the *Socinian* construction of this text which was just now laid before you is little less romantic than *Grotius's* exposition of the words — *he that came down from heaven*, i. e. says this famous commentator, he that “ was sent, or given to us by the special Grace of God.”

As some interpreters make, or, more properly, invent a distinction between primary and secondary worship, and would fain have us believe in a created creator, or a deity by delegation, so others of a very different stamp think of the Saviour of the world as meanly as they can possibly think, and divest him of almost every ray of glory. *The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us*, says St. John. †

* John iii. 13.

† John i. 14.

Christ was born mortal, subject to infirmities and sufferings, &c. say some Socinian expositors: the word WAS *flesh*, simply and absolutely, say others: the word WAS MADE, OR CONVERTED into *flesh*, says the *Flandrian Anabaptist*.

St. Paul assures the *Colossians*, that in *Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fulness** of the Godhead bodily; viz. all the will of God as we are given to understand by Socinus. Before *Abraham* was, I AM, † says our Lord expressly to the *Jews*; by which he means only to affirm, according to some interpreters, that he was the *Messiah* before *Abraham* was the father of many nations; or, as others expound, shall I say? or wrest this scripture, that he existed, or WAS before *Abraham* in the purpose and decree of God. How far the name of *Grotius* dignifies this exposition, let every intelligent hearer judge. Or, let us see whether we are like to derive more satisfaction from the following explanation or rather evacuation of this text by the celebrated

* Col. ii. 9.

† John viii. 58.

author

author of the *Scripture doctrine of the Trinity*.

“ Before Abraham was, and before all generations, I had a being with him of whom
 “ *Moses* told the *Isralites*, that his name was
 “ I AM.”

That often justly cited passage in the 9th. Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, is a rankling thorn in the eyes of unbelievers, which Dr. C. wished to extract with the poultice of a devised ambiguity. He would have us believe that the original *Greek* is of a doubtful construction, and may signify either, of whom Christ came; God who is over all be blessed for ever; or, of whom Christ came, who is over all; God be blessed for ever. To this text we shall have occasion to turn again.

The *Arians* in general confess that the Divine Personage who so often, and sometimes so magnificently makes his appearance under the Old Testament, is *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God; yet when this transcendent Being

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expressly

expressly says,—*I am the God of Bethel*,—we are to understand him as in effect saying only, *my Father, whom I represent, is God of Bethel*. Such is the sense of these expositors; who however kindly and *logically* grant that *the Word was with God*, or, in plain terms, existed from all eternity, tho' not *actually*, yet *potentially*! One is tempted to speak ludicrously by the extravagance of these conceits. Is not this *making the word of God of none effect* thro' wantonness of interpretation? Is not this turning holy Scripture, which should be the *rule of faith*, into a mere play-thing of fancy?

Let us take a view of another famous writer's sentiments on this important subject.—Mr. *Whiston*, after acknowledging *Jesus Christ*, (whom he calls λογος Θεανθρωπος) to have given the law upon mount *Sinai*, to have appeared to the Patriarchs, &c. and to have taken “the peculiar style, titles, attributes, adoration, and incommunicable name of the God of *Israel*,” supposes him to have been “truly and really concerned in the
“creation

“creation of the world.” But, observe, he was a Creator merely by commission; &c., “it being (according to this author) unfit and impossible for the DIVINE NATURE ITSELF, or at least THAT OF THE FATHER, to be so much, and in such a manner concerned with the corporeal world, and the sinful race of mankind, as we every where find this DIVINE PERSON, our blessed Mediator, to have been.”* And so we are obliged to this philosopher for his wonderful discovery, that *Jesus Christ*, tho’ a DIVINE PERSON with all the attributes &c. and the “incommunicable name of the God of *Israel*,” was yet without the DIVINE NATURE, because it is impossible for the DIVINE NATURE to act in the abstract; or at least for THAT of the FATHER to do so, which, it seems, is something *distinct* from, or superior to the *Divine*! If this is not Christianity, it is tolerable Platonism.

But the grand expedient to which a late-mentioned Divine, and indeed the *Arian*

* Whiston’s Solution, &c. p. 254.

fraternity

fraternity have usually recourse, is yet behind. Unable to withstand the united force of the several texts by which the full Divinity of our Saviour is evinced, they contrive to resolve the whole of his Deity into that absolute authority which, they say, he derives from his Father, and exercises jointly with him in the government of the universe. Dr. *Clarke* not unartfully tells us, that “*the*
 “*reason why the Scripture, tho’ it styles the*
 “*Father God, and also styles the Son God, yet*
 “*at the same time always declares that there is*
 “*but one God, is, because in the monarchy of*
 “*the universe there is but one authority, origi-*
 “*nal in the Father, derivative in the Son:*
 “*the power of the Son being not another power*
 “*opposite to that of the Father, nor another*
 “*power co-ordinate to that of the Father,*
 “*but itself the power and authority of the*
 “*Father, communicated to, manifested in, and*
 “*exercised by the Son.*” *

But did not, or would not this able writer recollect, that something besides power was communicated, when the *Father gave to the*

* Scrip. Doc. of the Trin. Prop. 39. See Stephens’s Sermon on the eternal generation, &c.

Son

*Son to have LIFE in himself?** From which passage I take occasion to observe, that when an ambiguous word occurs in any passage of Scripture; or a term, which independently considered, appears to denote communication from the Father, and inferiority in the Son, its signification is generally qualified and restrained by the plain tenor and importance of the whole sentence. This is eminently the case with the text last quoted. *As the Father hath life himself*, says our Blessed Lord, *so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*. In this phrase—*having life in himself*, (which is a periphrasis of *Jehovah*, the first and most essential name of the Deity,) the self-existence both of Father and Son from all eternity is necessarily implied: because tho' the word *given* imports communication of an incomprehensible kind, yet such communication must have been from eternity. To assert, that the Father gave self-existence to the Son from all eternity at any supposed period of time, would be neither more nor

* John 5. v. 26.

less than a contradiction in terms. † It may be worth while to adduce two or three instances more. *By him, viz. by Jesus Christ,* says St. Paul to the *Colossians*, *were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, &c. all things were created by him and for him.* Ch. 1. 16. Does not all this imply *unoriginateness*? Is not *Christ* represented here as absolutely the Creator? Yet in this very chapter reference is had to the Gospel-dispensation, and in that reference terms must necessarily be used importing subordination and inferiority. So in the 1st. chap. of the *Revelation*, where *Christ* is styled *Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, &c.* the same reference is made. *I am he that liveth, and was dead.* So again, *the Word was with God,* says St. *John*; and this expression does not necessarily imply equality, or coexistence. But what follows? — *The Word was God.*

We not unfrequently meet with interpreters who agree in opposition to the catholic sense of a passage, but differ in the mode of

† See this text miserably distorted in Locke's *Reasonab. of Christian.* p. 67.

it;

it; who, like contrary qualities in bodies counteracting each other, mutually defeat their respective ends by repugnancy of construction. We will turn to one or two singular instances of this.—*By whom also * he made the worlds*, says the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, speaking of *Jesus Christ*. One should hardly think these words liable to be misunderstood. But *Grotius*, unwilling, as it should seem, that *Jesus Christ* should be supposed to have any concern in the creation, even as an agent or minister, gives us to know, that the *worlds* were *made* not *by* him, but *for* him, or for his sake; agreeably enough to part of a text just now cited, and agreeably to the notion of the *Jewish* Rabbins, that the world was made for the *Messiah*. Now, in the first place, not to insist with *Dr. Whitby*, that this construction manifestly wrests the preposition *dia*, with a *genitive case* annexed to it, from its proper import, I wish to observe, that there is no admitting this learned writer's exposition of the place before us, and of that other passage of the Epistle

* Heb. 1. 2.

to the Romans, *Christ was raised from the dead* * *by the glory of the Father*, (the single one with which he supports his interpretation,) without obscuring, or confounding our ideas of the divine operations. For, according to our author, *God the Father made the worlds for the glory of his Son*, but raised up that Son from the dead for his own glory.—*Christ was raised from the dead for the glory of the Father*, says our commentator ; so that by this interpretation the Apostle in effect affirms, that *Christ was raised from the dead by the Father for the glory of the Father* : which at best is uncouth phraseology. But let us see how the passage will fare under the management of *Socinus* and his followers. These gentlemen are sensible of the powers of the preposition in question, but are equally reluctant to believe *Jesus Christ* to have been the Maker of the Universe.—*By whom he made the Worlds*; i. e. say they, by whose agency, or ministry God established a *spiritual kingdom*, and reconciled the world unto himself by the Gospel dispensa-

* Rom. 6. 4.

tion.

tion. Are not these several expositions as irreconcilable as light and darkness? And have we not reason in abundance rather to reject both, than to subscribe to either? I just observe farther; that *Grotius* had been more consistent, had he done no violence to the preposition aforesaid, and adopted the *Socinian* interpretation. For he is intirely of one mind with the *Socinians* in his explication of the above-cited parallel in the *first Chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians*.

But this is not the only instance of this great writer's inconsistency with others and with himself. Convinced by ocular demonstration of the resurrection of his Master; *Thomas answered and said*, that is, say some very gravely, in effect cried out, or exclaimed, *My Lord, and my God*. For, it seems, this is not the language of confession, but of astonishment! *Grotius* however sees this matter in a very different light. "Hic primum, " says he, ea vox in narratione Evangelica " reperitur ab Apostolis Jesu tributa, post- " quam scilicet sua resurrectione probaverat, " se

“ se esse a quo vita et quidem æterna ex-
 “ pectari deberet. Mansit deinde ille mos in
 “ Ecclesia, ut apparet non tantum in scriptis
 “ Apostolicis, ut in nono capite Epistolæ ad
 “ Romanos commate quinto, et veterum
 “ Christianorum, ut videre est apud Justinum
 “ Martyrem contra Tryphonem, sed et in
 “ Plinii ad Trajanum Epistola, ubi ait Chris-
 “ tianos Christo, ut Deo, carmina cecinisse.”*

And yet we are not much obliged to this
 eminent commentator for an acknowlege-
 ment which appears to have been forced from
 him. In the first place, it is not true that
 Christ is styled God purely because he is *the*
resurrection and the life, as is here more than
 intimated. It is not true, that he is so called
 by the Apostles and first Christians, merely
 on the strength of the passage before us. For
 though the terms in which St. *Thomas* de-
 clares his conviction, *My Lord, and my God*,
 occur not before, nor possibly could, Christ
 is not only in effect in many places, but also
 expressly styled God in this Gospel. In the
 next place it is worth remarking, that this
 author

* See Grotius in loc.

author in some sort at least asserts the Divinity of Christ from a text, of which, when he takes it separately in hand, he questions the authenticity. *

The truth is, we find too many among us perpetually leaning to the side of infidelity, by softening and qualifying as much as possible the sense of texts which are quoted every day on the part of the orthodox. An eminent commentator supposes the first prayer of the Apostles, *Thou Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen*, to be address'd not to Jesus Christ, but simply to God. *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved*, says St. Peter in his discourse on the day of Pentecost; i. e. says Dr. Pyle, "Whosoever shall believe and embrace his religion;" which paraphrase plainly reprobates the idea of invocation on Christ. The reference of the words *he is Lord of all*, in St. Peter's address to Cornelius, either to God the Father,

* See Grotius on Rom. ix. 5.

or to *Jesus Christ*, is at best perversely singular; and surely neither just nor natural. *To this end*, says St. Paul to the Romans, *Christ both died and rose, &c. that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*; * i. e. (according to our author's inadequate illustration,) that "he might be the Saviour and "rewarder of all good Christians." St. Paul wishes *grace and peace* to the Church at Corinth, &c; *to them that are called to be saints*,† *with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, &c; viz.* (as the same writer interprets the passage,) "to all "who worship God through *Jesus Christ*, "the Lord and Saviour of all that profess "his religion." In the second Chapter of this Epistle, the Apostle calls our Saviour *the Lord of glory*; meaning, it seems, thereby simply the *Messiah*. *God was manifest in the flesh*, says the same Apostle to *Timothy*; which, being interpreted by this writer, is only equivalent to "the Son of God took upon him "our nature." In short, our author's notion

* Rom. xiv. 9.

† 1 Cor. i. 2.

of the whole *mystery* of the Gospel seems to be lamentably insufficient, when he tells, and in more places than one tells us, that it signifies only the admission of *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* into the Christian covenant.

But a very recent instance of perverse interpretation in the work of a sensible and specious author* out of our Church is fit to be taken into particular consideration. In his note on that famous passage in the Epistle to the *Romans*, (which the Anti-trinitarians are ever attempting to press into the service of *Arianism*, as has already been in effect seen,) viz. *of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever*; this author admits the justness of the application to our blessed Lord, who, says he, “is *God over all*, as he is by the Father AP-
“POINTED Lord, King, and Governour of
“all.” And then he refers to several texts as declarative of such APPOINTMENT.

* Mr. Taylor. See his *Key to the Apostolical Writings*.

The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son ; John v. 22. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God ; &c. John. xiii. 3.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth ; Matt. xxviii. 18.

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all ; &c. Acts x. 36.

*God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name ; Phil. ii. 9. and set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, &c. and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, &c. Ephes. i. 21, &c. He hath put all things under his feet, &c. 1 Cor. xv. 27. " This, says our author, is our Lord's " SUPREME GODHEAD. And that he is " blessed for ever, or the object of ever- " lasting blessing, is evident from Revelation " v. 12, 13." *Worthy is the Lamb, &c. to receive blessing, &c. and every creature, &c. heard**

heard I saying, blessing, and honour, &c. be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever, &c. Now it is very observable that in some of the places here referred to there is not any intimation of an *appointment*. The annotator seems to be aware of this when it is too late; he grows jealous of the passage he had admitted; and, like one conscious of having allowed more than his hypothesis could conveniently afford, to all intents and purposes revokes his grant by a counter construction, and so at one dash deprives our Lord both of his blessedness and supremacy. For thus he proceeds. “ But what this part of his character, in which he is *more nearly related to* “ *believing Gentiles, than to infidel Jews,* “ *has to do with privileges belonging to the* “ *latter, doth not seem to me very clear;* “ *much less can I conceive, why the Apostle* “ *in this particular enumeration of Jewish* “ *privileges, should not mention their rela-* “ *tion to God, as their God, in which they* “ *particularly gloried, (Chapter ii. 17.) and* “ *which was indeed the glory of all their*

“glories, being the first and grand article in
 “the covenant with *Abraham*; and which
 “he fails not to assert among the singular
 “privileges of *Christians*, (Ch. v. 11.) when
 “he is shewing that the subjects of their
 “glorying were not inferior to those of the
 “*Jews*. How could he overlook the main
 “article of this list? Or what if there
 “should be a transposition of a single letter
 “in the text, *o* *ov* for *ov* *o*. This will remove
 “every difficulty. Then the *English* will be,
 “*of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came,*
 “*whose is the God over all, blessed for ever.*
 “Thus the grand privilege will be inserted
 “to advantage, and stand at the top of a
 “lofty *climax* rising from the Father, to
 “Christ, and to God. *We have indeed no*
 “*copy to justify this reading.* But the afore-
 “said considerations seem to make it pro-
 “bable the article (*o*) might be very easily
 “transposed. This is only my conjecture.”

Now I beg leave to ask, whether our an-
 notator was under an absolute necessity of
 conjecturing? Conjectures, I presume, are
 never

never admissible in criticism, but when they clear the sense of an author from obscurity ; or when direct absurdities, or considerable difficulties are removed by them. Is either of these cases the case at present ? So far from it, that unless we are to sacrifice sense to figure, and real truth to ideal climax, I affirm without ceremony the old and universal reading to be the only right one ; and that this passage, abundantly plain and consistent in itself, is here obscured by elucidation, and marred by amendment. Mr. T. in fact smothers himself in a dust of his own raising. For though, in a spirit of true compassion, and in the tenderest affection to his brethren, &c. the Apostle calls to mind their national character, and many of the privileges they had enjoyed, yet at the time of his writing this Epistle, it should be remembered, that their grand privilege of all, as our author justly terms it, that which the *Jews* constantly made their boast of, and “ which was indeed the glory of all their “ glories,” was absolutely lost, and irrecoverably *done away* for ever. God was no longer

their God in any sense favourable to them ; they were disowned ; they were *cut off* by him, to use St. *Paul's* words in another place ; the believing *Gentiles* were now “ more nearly “ related to him ;” *they* were *purified* to be a *peculiar people* ; and *Jews*, as *Jews*, had no manner of interest in the new dispensation : so that, according to this author's construction, the Apostle falsifies fact, and insults his *kinsmen*, by way of commiseration.

There is another text which the same author handles not less to his own disadvantage. *Every house is builded by some man*, says the writer of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, Ch. iii. 4. *but he that built all things is God*. Mr. T's. paraphrase is as follows. “ When he saith, “ *every house is builded by some person*, but he “ *who built all things is God*, he evidently “ distinguishes between a *subordinate* and “ *Supreme* builder. But this distinction he “ needed not to have mentioned, had he not “ spoke of a *subordinate* builder before. For, “ if in the case under consideration, there “ be no *subordinate* builder at all, this distinction

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“ tinction is nothing to his purpose. Then
 “ his argument would have been; *Christ*
 “ must build the house; because no one
 “ could build it but he; seeing no house is
 “ built by any but God. Whereas, contra-
 “ riwise, he asserts a *subordinate* builder, and
 “ tells us such a one is consistent with God’s
 “ being the *Supreme* original builder.”

Now, I take it, this is a mere fanciful distinction of Mr. *Taylor*’s own brain. The context runs thus. *This man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house: for every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God.* Surely he that built all things, he who made the world was the very Person or Being that built the house, as the Apostle expresses it; i. e. who founded the whole *Jewish* OEconomy, ecclesiastical and civil; and consequently, though every house is builded by some man, though every institution, &c. has some author, and *Moses* in particular may be said to be a founder in a secondary sense, *Jesus Christ*

Christ is strictly and properly the Supreme Architect, as we may say, as well in the one as the other of the above instances, to the total exclusion of every idea of *subordination*. And so this very passage in effect plainly asserts our Saviour's Divinity, and confirms the *Supremacy* this Gentleman appears to be extremely forward to destroy by it. It is remarkable enough that the texts under consideration have been before now a *snare* to unbelievers. For the *Socinian* gloss on them is, "that Christ is as much more excellent than *Moses* as God is more excellent than his "own people;" and this superexcellence is on all hands allowed not to come one jot short of absolute infinity.

In consequence of the shifts to which infidelity is reduced, it will add, omit, affirm, and suggest, sometimes arbitrarily, sometimes imprudently, and sometimes on weak and incompetent authority. That passage in *St. Paul's* first Epistle to *Timothy*, *without controversy great is the mystery of godliness*; * *God*

* 1 Tim. iii. 16.

was

was manifest in the flesh, &c. makes so clearly for us, that the *Socinians*, and they who patronise them, struggle to get rid of it at all events. And that they do so purely by the help of a supposititious reading, which can be supported only by a strained, incoherent, and ridiculous construction, (according to which the *mystery of godliness was manifest in the flesh*, and *received up into glory, &c.* instead of *Jesus Christ*,) hath been abundantly shewn by many, and especially by the learned Bishop *Pearson* in his *Exposition of the Creed*.

With a view to the elusion of certain passages in the *Revelation* which we have already produced as plainly expressive of the *Son's* coequal majesty with the *Father*, *Grotius* has most unwarrantably assigned them their proper and respective *thrones* in heaven. *He that sat on the throne, &c. in primo solio, id est Deus*, says he in his paraphrase of Rev. xxi. 5.

Supposing, for argument's sake, the merit of the *trinitarian* controversy to depend chiefly
on

on the authenticity of the seventh verse in St. *John's* 1st *Epistle*, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one, ‡ I would gladly ask, whether it is not, in the nature of things, at least as reasonable to suppose in general that this text was omitted by the enemies of the doctrine of the *Trinity*, as that it was inserted by its friends? And if so, infidelity would appear at best to stand upon a precarious foundation, as far as it depends on the spuriousness of this text; and we should surely err with more prudence and modesty on the side of the Catholic Church, than against her. But an excellent writer * has, in his *Letters* to Mr. *Gibbon* on this subject, evinced the genuineness of this text to the intire satisfaction of every candid and impartial inquirer; and particularly makes it appear, that “ the context of the Apostle
 “ is so far from receiving any injury by the
 “ retention of the verse in question, that it
 “ would lose all its genuine spirit, would be-
 “ come unapt and feeble in its application,

‡ See Mr. JONES on this verse.

* Mr. Travis.

“ and

“ and therefore could hardly be said to subsist
 “ without it.” To this performance I refer
 you with pleasure.

It has been urged, and with an air of confidence, that *Jesus Christ* cannot be an object of divine worship, because in that excellent form of address to the Deity which he recommended to his disciples, there is not the least mention made of himself, nor the most distant allusion to his office and character. A circumstance which has been considered as decisive in favour of *Unitarianism*. Some persons have as *little of knowledge* as they have of *faith* in these matters. At the time of his dictating this mode of prayer, our blessed Lord was not, properly speaking, either the *mediator between God and man*, or a *sacrifice for the sins of the whole world*. Though therefore this form of devotion is used at this day with the greatest propriety imaginable, yet it was originally delivered to the disciples for their own more immediate use ; as is manifest from the nature of the thing, and from *St. Luke's* account of this matter. *It came*

to

to pass, says that Evangelist, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c. It was not till after his Ascension, and return to his Father, that they could properly pray to or through him; that they were to ask in his name, and to receive; it was not till after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, † and sat down at the right hand of God, that his mediatorial character commenced, in which he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*

There are two remarkable passages in St. Paul's Epistles, which, as they are claimed by our adversaries with more appearance of right than the foregoing, it will be proper to take into consideration. *Who (i. e. Jesus Christ) being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, &c. ‡* This text is often quoted as asserting the true Divinity of our Saviour. I am therefore concerned to deliver

* Luke xi. 1.

‡ Phil. ii. 6. &c.

† Heb. x. 12. vii. 25.

it from the construction which the *Arians* with much assurance put upon it; and which many amongst ourselves have, I think, very unwarily admitted; subjecting themselves thereby to the necessity of having recourse to a hackneyed, and after all mere verbal distinction between *self-existence* and *necessary existence*, in order to reconcile their admission with orthodox principles. *Thought it not robbery*, &c. *εχ απαυμων ηγησατο*, i. e. (says *Novatian* and many with him,) he never compared himself with God the Father, *nunquam se Deo Patri aut comparavit aut contulit*; the reason follows, *memor se esse ex suo Patre*. Every *Arian* will abide by this explication; and how do the advocates for *Novatian* get clear of the imputed consequences? Why, says *Dr. Waterland*, “this interpretation of the text (supposing it just) implies no more than this, “that *Jesus Christ* never pretended to an “equality with the Father in respect of his “original, knowing himself to be second only “in order, not the first Person of the ever-blessed Trinity.” *Dr. W.* observes, that the whole passage in *Novatian*, rightly understood,

derstood, affords a strong proof of the co-equality of the two Persons; and that it is quoted accordingly by Dr. *Whitby* in his treatise *de vera Christi deitate*. But as this can only be done by help of the above distinction, I must ask, why *Novatian's* sense of this text must be admitted as the true one? He did not *affect*, say some, did not *claim*, did not *take upon him*, &c. to be honoured as God. Notwithstanding the great authorities of *Grotius*, *Tillotson*, and *Clarke*, &c.* with which this interpretation is fortified, I cannot help thinking the reading in use, *thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, not barely to be the more eligible, but indeed the proper reading. For, not to insist on one circumstance in its favour, which is the non-agreement of the several interpretations of the learned Gentlemen above-mentioned, it deserves to be noted, that though the phrase *εχ' αρταγμων ηγησατο* would admit the construction contended for, yet the context will be found absolutely to revolt against it. Granting the phrase *being in the form of God* to be

* See Mr. Parkhurst's Note at p. 79. of his Treatise on the Divinity and Pre-existence of our Saviour.

in

in itself of undeterminate signification, yet when predicated of him who is *one* with the *Father*, who *was in the beginning with God*, and really and truly *was God*, it certainly is to be regarded as synonymous with those expressions; and consequently as importing an intimate equality with God. But herewith the construction of *Novatian*, and of the *Arians*, not to say of Dr. W. himself, is totally incompatible. The reading in use therefore must be allowed to be not only natural, but necessary. *He thought it not robbery*, i. e. to be no violation of right, or justice.

The other passage is the following. *There is one body*, says the Apostle to the Ephesians, and *one Spirit*; *one Lord*, *one Faith*, *one Baptism*; *one God*, and *Father of all*, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Chap. iv. 4. &c. The *Socinian* and the *Arian* inference from these texts is obvious; but in proof that it is an unfair one, I would remark, that had St. *Paul* intended here to have distinguished the *Father* from the *Son* and the

O

Spirit

Spirit, by this ascription of Supremacy, he would certainly have named the two latter with their severally discriminating inferior titles; and this without a needless, and I might say, impertinent combination of *unities*, if I may so call them. Besides, had this been the Apostle's design, how comes it to pass that supremacy is in almost the same terms ascribed in the *New Testament* to *Jesus Christ*; whose *throne is for ever and ever*, who is *Lord of all, who is over all, God blessed for ever*? Or how are we to account for its being so frequently said, that both *Christ* and the *Spirit* as well as the *Father* is *in us*? If the manifest attribution of Supremacy in the texts just now cited does not exclude the *Father*, why must it be understood in the place under consideration to exclude the *Son*? The same question may be asked with the same propriety, and with the same success, with regard to the following well-known passages in the first Epistle to *Tim.* which, I believe, the Anti-trinitarians in general set with much assurance at the head of their authorities.

Now

Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever : † Who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see : to whom be honour and power everlasting. Surely all this is briefly but fully comprehended in the above descriptions of *Jesus Christ* ; to whom, by the way, independently on the *Father*, St. *Peter* ascribes glory both now and for ever. We shall now be able to despatch with no difficulty certain passages which at first sight have an humiliating tendency, and seem to import the inferiority of the *Son* to the *Father*, and the impersonality of the Holy Ghost. It may be of use to expose pretences.

With respect to his human character, or his legation, *Christ* is confessedly *God's* ; and the *head of Christ* is *God* ; and, says he, *my Father is greater than I*. We have already seen, that the absolute Godhead of *Jesus*

† 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 15, &c.

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Christ, though it had been on certain occasions not barely intimated, but in plain terms asserted by him, was not uniformly manifested to his disciples during his residence upon earth. It was a truth which he was in due time fully to authenticate to them, but which at present for obvious reasons they could *not bear*. * Accordingly, as in many other places, so in the words last quoted, which were calculated to sooth them under the loss they were about to sustain by his *going away, my Father is greater than I*, the blessed *Jesus* with particular propriety alludes to the commission he had undertaken, and adapts himself to their imperfect and unsettled conceptions. † On pretty much the same ground he had at another time declared to the *ruler* who addressed him under the character of *Good Master*, ‡ that *there is none good but one, that is God*. The full manifestation of the great mystery of the Gospel was reserved for the *day of Pentecost*; before which consideration a thousand difficulties

* See Parkhurst's *Divin. &c. of Christ*. p. 102. &c. 117. &c.

† See *Disc.* 3 and 7. See *John* xiv. 26. xv. 26.

‡ See *Luke* xviii. 18.

will

will crumble into atoms; and by which an answer is given in full to the substance of what Dr. *Priestly* has advanced in the *first Sect. of the Introd. to his History of EARLY OPINIONS*, with respect to the silence of the *Old Testament*, and the incompetency of a great part of the *New*.

This is life eternal, says our blessed Lord, *that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* * Our Lord, speaking here in his human capacity, and with reference to his mission, very naturally avows his Father to be *the only true God*, in contradistinction to all *false Gods*; but cannot be supposed to exclude *himself* and the *Holy Ghost*, who are partakers of one essence with the *true*.

So again: *who is the first born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God.* † As to the latter of these expressions, it implies no more, according to some interpretations, than the Father of the Christian

* John xvii. 3.

† Col. i. 15. Rev. iii. 14.

Church, &c ; or, if the original word had been rendered the *cause*, or the *origin*, instead of the *beginning*, as with very sufficient warrant it might have been, this text is so far from affirming *Christ* to be a *creature*, that, in effect, it avers him to be the *Creator* ; or, if it be precisely equivalent to the former expression, it will in course be reducible to the same signification. Now literally, and in his human character, *Jesus Christ* was not the *first-born of every creature* ; and in his divine character he was not born or begotten at all, except in a transcendent and incomprehensible sense ; but he was, and is styled in a few verses below, the *first-born from the dead*, and in his own resurrection ascertained ours, &c. And in this just sense he is the *first-born of every creature*, the *beginning of the Creation of God*, or of the new creation and constitution of things, not only without disparagement to his divine nature, but in direct confirmation of it.

So again : *Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither*

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neither the Son, but the Father. * In our Saviour's human capacity, or in his mediatorial character, the final and general judgment was a matter that did not concern him ; but in his divine character he cannot but know the time of his own visitations.

So again : *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.* † These words contain a proper and natural commission given to *Mary Magdalen* by our blessed Lord in consequence of his resurrection, and agreeably to what he had spoken *unto* his disciples *when he was yet in Galilee.* ‡ It was his intention to signify by her the speedy accomplishment of what he had frequently foretold and promised them under the character of the *Messiah* ; but it was neither necessary nor expedient to discover to her singly the *fulnefs* of his *Godhead*.

So once more : *When all things shall be subdued unto him, THEN shall the Son also*

* Mark xiii. 32.

† John xx. 17.

‡ Luke xxiv. 6.

himself be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. § In other words; when the great scheme of man's redemption shall be completed, *Christ* shall resign his commission into his hands from whom he received it, and his mediatorial kingdom be succeeded by the eternal kingdom of God, the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, with whom the *Saints, and Spirits of just men made perfect*, shall live in fulness of bliss and glory. This is the obvious and indeed necessary construction. For if we attend to the *letter* of this passage, and not to the *spirit* and scope of it, *when all things shall be subdued, &c.* THEN shall the Son be subject, &c. we shall assert that *Jesus Christ* will be *subject* to the *Father* AFTER the consummation of all things, but was not so BEFORE; or, that he was greater in his *human* character than in his *divine*: which is absurd. *He must reign*, says the Apostle, *just before, till he hath put all things under his feet.* Now it is not literally true that he shall reign so long, and no longer than this, as the words

§ 1 Co. xv. 28.

import.

import. For though his reign over the Church militant shall cease, of his reign over the Church triumphant *there shall be no end*. The truth is, with the Evangelical plan, with the commission of *Jesus Christ*, the idea of subordination, or subjection, is connected ; but with regard to absolute perfection of essence and attribute, the complement of the Godhead, the Trinity in Unity, ever was, and for ever will be ALL IN ALL.

Lastly : with respect to such expressions as the following, which appear inconsistent with personality, *be filled with the Spirit* ; * *quench not the Spirit* ; † *the Spirit which he hath given us* ; ‡ *receive ye the Holy Ghost* ; § &c. it is obvious to remark, that, agreeably to a common figure, the cause and its effects are promiscuously used ; and accordingly by the *Spirit* in all these places, and in all parallel ones, we are to understand the gifts and graces of which the *Holy Spirit*, or *Holy Ghost* is the dispenser. If this interpretation

* Ephes v. 18.

† 1 John iii. 24.

‡ 1 Theff. v. 19.

§ John xx. 22.

be not admitted, we may with equal propriety and justice call in question the personality of *Jesus Christ* in his human character, and even that of God the Father himself. For *if Christ be in us, the body is dead*; * and *God is a consuming fire*; † *God is love*; ‡ and *God is in you of a truth*. §

On the whole then, I may fairly conclude with remarking, that, for the most part, in the arguments of *Socinians* we may be said to have *premises* without *conclusions*, and in those of *Arians* *conclusions* without *premises*; and that there is nothing in the feeble attempts, the bold assertions, or the *perverse disputings* of our adversaries, I do not say to terrify, but in any degree to discourage us from *striving together for the faith of the Gospel*, even that *faith which standeth not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God*. **

* Rom. viii. 10.

† 1 John iv. 8,

** 1 Cor. ii. 5.

† Heb. xii. 29.

§ 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

DISCOURSE VII.

I C O R. Chapter 15. Verse 12.

If Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

THAT important article of our Creeds, the *Resurrection of the Body*, is the other great *mystery* which has all along been *foolishness* to Infidels, and a *stumbling-block* to many Christians. Under this article then I am to endeavour, agreeably to my engagements, to give all the satisfaction which the sensible, the candid, and the well-disposed can require.

I might insist that the great doctrine before us is virtually at least contained in my text :
but

but as there is a strong propensity in human pride to consider what is propounded to our faith as insulting our understandings, it will be necessary to enter into a full and even minute discussion of the subject.

A late ingenious author, Dr. *Sykes*, very confidently asserts, that this doctrine has no manner of warrant from scriptural authority. He observes, as Mr. *Locke* has done before him, that “there is not any such expression “in the New Testament as the *Resurrection of the flesh*; that the Scriptures often speak “of a *Resurrection*, and of the *Resurrection of the dead*; but as to the *Resurrection of the body, or of the flesh*, there is not “one word. And therefore that such an “article was required *at first* to be professed “in order to Baptism, can never be proved.”*

I have already apologized for freedoms taken with the dead. The names I just now mentioned are of the first authority with unbelievers at this day; and I take a part in the controversy with a hope to con-

* See Enquiry when the Resurrection of the Body was first inserted in the Creeds. sub. init.

duct

duct it to your content, if not by recency of argument, or reply, at least by the mode of their enforcement.

Now that the above expressions or phrases, —the *Resurrection of the body*, or *the flesh*, never occur in the New Testament ; that this article, together with some others which Dr. S. mentions, did not make a part of the *Baptismal Creed* before the middle of the fourth century, may without difficulty be admitted ; because if it will appear, that the *Resurrection of the body*, or *of the flesh*, is most unquestionably the doctrine of Scripture, and of the Apostolical and primitive Church, we are bound by all means to retain it ; and its insertion into the *Creed* at any time was both proper and necessary ; the original *Creed*, whatever it precisely was, having been reasonably enlarged, (by Dr. S's own confession), as circumstances demanded, and heresies multiplied.

Let us enquire then, whether the doctrine of the *Resurrection*, as it is delivered in our
Creeds,

Creeds, be not founded in evidence rational, scriptural, and irresistible.

If we consider this doctrine as a matter of opinion, and not of faith, we shall find it to have countenance in no contemptible authority. Tho' the heathens saw *spiritual things* in general thro' a dim *glafs* indeed; tho' the prospect of futurity was greatly clouded to a world almost wholly corrupt in principle, and abandoned in practice, yet the notion of another state, and even of a *resurrection*, or of a *renovation* of all things, which is a *resurrection* in effect, was far from being universally exploded, as absolutely ridiculous, or chimerical. We are assured *Zoroustrès* taught the doctrine of the *resurrection* among the antient *Persians*, as he himself derived it most probably from the *Jews*, with whom he had communications. *Grotius*, who, with respect to this article at least, was not of *doubtful mind*, in proof of the admissible possibility of the thing, cites the authorities both of historians and philosophers, and affirms it to have been the tenet of almost the whole sect of the Stoics. * The Grecian

* See *Grotius de vent.* l. 7. and 10. *Le-Clerc's Notes.* *Prideaux Connect.* v. 1. p. 103. &c.

custom

custom of burying the dead with their faces upwards, and looking toward the rising Sun, which is exactly the Christian mode, has a very strong smatch of this sentiment. (aa) 'Tis observable, *Mahomet* speaks in his *Koran* of the *resurrection* as of a doctrine known and received in the world from the beginning, and far antecedently to the *Mosaic* dispensation. This appears from the following passage. "That this, i.e. the doctrine of the *resurrection*, is no other than fables of the " *ANTIENS* is, says he, the pretence of " unbelievers." And indeed his learned translator remarks in his *Preliminary Discourse*, that some of the *Pagan Arabs* believed neither a *creation*, nor *resurrection*; but that others believed both. We are given to understand by a sensible writer, that the first *Europeans* who visited *China* found many Christian truths intermingled with the trash of fable, and tradition; that the *Gentiles* of *Indostan* have confused notions of the Trinity; and in particular that the people of *Ceylon* believe the *Resurrection of the Body*. *

* *Jenkins's Reasonab. &c.* V. 1. p. 103. P. on the Cr. p. 379.

In

In his note at the 19th verse of the 26th chapter of *Isaiah*,—*Tby dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise, &c.* the learned Bp. *Lowth* observes, that the doctrine of the *resurrection of the dead* must have been “a popular and common doctrine” among the *Jews*, at the time of the delivery of this prophecy; and we may reasonably make the same inference from a parallel passage in *Daniel*;—*many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; &c. many*, as I find it noted by the judicious commentator, being here and elsewhere manifestly equivalent to *all*.

That the notion of a *Resurrection*, according to the common acceptation of the term, prevailed among the *Jews* in our Saviour's time, will be soon manifest from certain occurrences and passages in the evangelical writings. *St. Paul*, in his apology before King *Agrippa*, affirms it to have its foundation in the *hope of the promise made unto the Fathers*: tho' when, where, or in what manner, he mentions not. And certain it is that the *Pharisees*, the *straitest* and most considerable

considerable *Sett* among them, not only entertained this notion with seriousness, but contended for it with vehemency ; as appears from the violence of opposition between them and the *Sadducees*, who as strenuously denied it. What then did both parties understand by it ? Let us, for a resolution of this question, turn first to the account which the evangelists give us of a discourse held by the *Sadducees* with our Saviour, on the subject of the *Resurrection*. *The same day*, says St. *Matthew*, and much in the same words, St. *Mark*, and St. *Luke* after him, *came to him the Sadducees, who say that there is no Resurrection, and asked him, saying, Master, Moses said, if a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother : now there were with us seven brethren ; and the first when he had married a wife, deceased ; and having no issue left his wife to his brother ; likewise the second also, and the third, to the seventh. And last of all, the woman died also. Therefore in the Resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven, for they all*

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had

had her. * The argument herein implied is indeed perfectly ridiculous, and grossly carnal; and is exposed accordingly by our blessed Lord in his reply to it: but it undeniably supposes the *resurrection* of the *bodies* of these same *brethren* and their *wife*, agreeably to the *Pharisaical* hypothesis. Indeed that very reply plainly supposes the same thing. *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.* All this is abundantly confirmed by our Saviour's own argument immediately following. *As touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* There is neither connection, nor indeed sense in this portion of scripture-history, unless we suppose the re-union of the *souls* and *bodies* of *Abraham* and *Isaac*, &c. in the *resurrection*; and that our Sa-

* Matt. 22. 23. &c.

viour meant by implication to assert it. For his argument directly proves nothing more than the immortality of the soul, and its consequential existence in a future state. But had this proof been the sole object of his discourse, he would most assuredly have expressed himself in a very different manner upon the occasion. Our Lord's meaning is yet more fully discovered by St. *Luke's* account of this matter. *Now that the dead are raised*, says he, according to that Evangelist, *EVEN Moses shewed at the bush*, saying, &c.

Again: When our Lord told *Martha*, that her *brother*, newly deceased, should *rise again*, *she said unto him*, says the sacred text, *I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day*.* Now that *Martha* believed her *brother* should *rise again at the last day* with that *body* which was laid in the grave, and had been *dead four days*, is evident enough from this consideration; that, though she appears to have been doubtful of the possibility of his resurrection at *that* time,

* John xi. 24.

and in so *extraordinary* a way, *Lord*, says she, *by this time he stinketh*, and this notwithstanding *her* avowed belief that *whatsoever* our Saviour would *ask of God*, *God* would give it him, and *his* declaration that he was himself *the resurrection and the life*, yet when *Lazarus* actually *came forth*, neither she nor the many *Jews* who were present shewed the least sign of amazement. It does not appear that they were in any degree astonished at this mode of his restoration to life; and therefore we may justly presume they were persuaded that *in the resurrection at the last day* “all men shall rise again with their bodies,” through the operation of that omnipotent power which, *in the twinkling of an eye*, is able to inspire life and vigour into dust and ashes, and animate corruption itself.

The supposed *resurrection* of *John the Baptist* may be considered in the same point of view. *Herod*, hearing of the *fame of Jesus*, said unto his servants, as the Evangelist acquaints us, *this is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works*

works do shew forth themselves in him. Herod hardly thought these works were done by the spirit or apparition of the Baptist; and if not, we must conclude that he believed him to be risen indeed, according to the notions entertained by the Jews. The sacred history informs us the Sadducees were grieved that the Apostles preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And is it not as plain as implication can make it, that their doctrine was, that the followers of Jesus, and indeed all men, should be raised in like manner as he was?

The truth is, of this kind of implied evidence we have plenty in the sacred volume. I will only produce one piece more of Gospel-history, in presumptive proof that *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* understood by a *resurrection* what we do at this day. St. Paul concludes his discourse to the *Athenians* with insisting on the certainty of a future judgment from the assurance which God had given to all men of it, by his having raised that man, whom he had ordained to be their judge,

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from

*from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, says the historian, some mocked; but others said, we will hear thee again of this matter.** Now St. Paul's audience consisted chiefly of *Stoics* and *Epicureans*; and the latter most undoubtedly were the party that derided the doctrine which the former did not conceive to be altogether extravagant, or ridiculous. But had the Apostle meant only to inculcate the general doctrine of a future state, the *Stoics* in all probability would have been satisfied as to that point without a farther hearing; and the *Epicureans* would have no more *mocked*, or insulted, than if a *Stoic* had preached it.

Indeed there is one circumstance in the evangelical history which at first glance may be thought to militate against what has been laid before you. When our Saviour came down from the mountain after his *Transfiguration*, with *Peter, James, and John*, and charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen

* Acts xvii. 32.

from

from the dead, they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another, what the rising from the dead should mean. † But that they could not possibly doubt what was to be understood by the expression, or the thing itself, is demonstrable from preceding considerations; and therefore the case must have been this. They were perplexed with the account our Lord had given of himself; they could not conceive how their Master, whom they still regarded as a temporal deliverer, should suffer and be put to an ignominious death, (as he had assured them he should in the 31st v. of the last Chapter;) or how the expected deliverance would be effected by, or after such resurrection: this was probably the subject of their enquiry; they questioned one with another, not what THE, but what HIS rising from the dead should mean. All this is perfectly consistent with a parallel passage in St. Luke. He took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be ac-

† Mark ix. 10.

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complished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully intreated and spitted on ; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death : and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things : and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken. Luke xviii. 31.

What has already been advanced will obviate a common assertion, or insinuation, that there is a very material difference between the case of a body which has been dead a few days, or months, or even years, and of one which has been buried in the earth many centuries since ; and that the same Power which is able to effect a *resurrection* in the former case, cannot be conceived adequate to the like operation in the latter. And indeed it deserves to be remarked, that to maintain, or to intimate this, is at best to make extremely free with Omnipotence, and in fact only begs a question instead of satisfying it. Besides, this expedient will appear to be heavily encumbered with strange inconveniences ;

ences ; to speak much less harshly of it than perhaps in justice I should. When a finite understanding has laid the line which infinite power cannot pass, it will have a fair claim to our attention ; although, even were this done, the number of instances we meet with in holy writ of the same identical body's being raised from the grave, or restored to life, which had actually deceased, will however justify our supposition, that the bodies of such as shall die within a reasonable time before the *last day* shall be raised after this *modus* or manner ; and agreeably to the common and natural ideas of a *resurrection*. It will be hard indeed if our adversaries will not allow us to take this for granted ; and if they will, the same understanding which is able to measure infinity can readily inform us how, or whether with a body or without one, the bulk of mankind shall appear at the great day of final retribution.

I come now to revelation more clear and explicit ; to plain, intelligible Scripture ; with respect to which, it pains one to see so great a man as Mr. *Locke* taking refuge
in

in the above distinction, and indeed in the most pitiful evasions. Observe then how this justly celebrated philosopher expresses himself in the passage following. “ In the
 “ New Testament (wherein, I think, are
 “ contained all the articles of the Christian
 “ Faith,) I find our Saviour and his Apostles to preach the *resurrection from the*
 “ *dead*, and the *resurrection of the dead* in
 “ many places : but I do not remember any
 “ place where the *resurrection of the same body*
 “ is so much as mentioned. Nay, which is
 “ very remarkable in the case, I do not re-
 “ member in any place of the New Testa-
 “ ment, (where the general *resurrection* at
 “ the last day is spoken of,) any such ex-
 “ pression as the *resurrection of the body*, much
 “ less of the *same body*. I say, the general
 “ *resurrection*, &c. because where the *resur-*
 “ *rection* of some *particular persons* presently
 “ upon our Saviour’s resurrection is men-
 “ tioned, the words are, *the graves were*
 “ *opened, and many bodies of saints, which slept,*
 “ *arose, and came out of the graves, after his*
 “ *resurrection, and went into the holy city, and*
 “ *appeared to many* : of which peculiar way
 “ of

“ of speaking of *this* resurrection, the passage
 “ itself gives a reason in these words, *appeared to many*; i. e. those *who slept, appeared*, so as to be risen. But this could
 “ not be known, unless they brought with
 “ them the evidence, that they were those
 “ who had been dead, &c. And it is probable they were such as were *newly* dead,
 “ whose bodies were not *yet* dissolved, &c.”*

There is, I persuade myself, little or nothing in this passage but has its answer in the foregoing considerations; unless we should be kind enough to acknowledge for argument the triumphant sneer of that parenthesis, (*wherein, I think, are contained all the Articles of the Christian Faith.*) It might therefore be sufficient to remark, that Mr. L. seems to admit *mysteries* as some people dispense *alms*, viz. *grudgingly*, or *of necessity*; and at the same time to express our obligations to him for his indulgent concession, that *bodies* have been raised from the dead upon *particular occasions*. But because this great writer may possibly be still thought by some to have hit

* See Essay on the Human Underst. and ch. on Identity.
 upon

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upon an expedient, which happily helps him out of embarrassment, in the stale distinction between a *particular* and the *general* Resurrection, let us see whether this distinction will not vanish before the ensuing argumentation.

I venture to aver then that the *resurrection* of the *body* of *Jesus Christ* is an especial earnest, or sure token of the *resurrection* of our *bodies* from the dead. I desire your impartial judgment of the texts which follow. *Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.* God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. If we have been† planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. He who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus.‡ As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.§* These texts will be sufficient for my present purpose. Let us consider them separately a little. *Now is*

* 1 Cor. xv. 20. vi. 14.

† 2 Cor. iv. 14.

† Rom. vi. 5.

§ John v. 21.

Christ

Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. I need not enlarge upon the *Jewish* practice alluded to under this figurative expression; and shall only observe, that, as the *first-fruits* were offerings of that identical grain of which the harvest was to follow, the *resurrection* of our *bodies*, after that of Christ, could not have been signified by a finer emblem. *God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power: i. e.* most undoubtedly, he will raise up us in like manner. *If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.* The former part of this verse has some obscurity in it, which may be liable to various construction; but the latter ascertains, almost as fully as words can do, the great article before us. *He who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus.* This text is exactly parallel with that just quoted from the other Epistle to the *Corinthians*. *As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.* This proof runs rather in another line, but however

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ever will terminate in the same point. For we may safely conclude, that the Son will *raise the dead, and quicken them* hereafter, in the same manner in which himself and many dead persons have been already raised. We have by this time, I hope, sufficient grounds for this conclusion. And indeed St. Paul assures us, that the *Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body that IT may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.** For how, or when shall he do this, if not in the GENERAL resurrection at the last day, and by a change of THAT body which was deposited in the ground? Our *vile body* is not to be *changed* for ANOTHER body, but is ITSELF to be *fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body*. Would it not be *prima facie* ridiculous to attempt torturing the passage to any other sense?

Though what has been here offered can, I think, scarcely fall short of bringing conviction to a mind open to it, yet it will be greatly corroborated by other passages and particulars, and especially by the doctrine

* Phil. iii. 21.

contained

contained in the *fifteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians*, which is almost totally spent upon this subject. In truth, there are more reasons than one for our not passing by that Chapter. If we read this portion of Scripture with due attention, and impartiality, we shall be led, I presume, to this unavoidable conclusion, that the *bodies* of all men shall be raised, if not absolutely, totally, or numerically, yet really and truly the same as they died ; or, in other words, that the *bodies* which shall be raised shall, with their respective souls, constitute the same persons that lived before in the world : nor can this doctrine be invalidated by metaphysical subtilties, and *oppositions of science falsely so called* ; which are much less calculated to satisfy, than to perplex and confound us. If the import of such passages as the following, *it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory ; † it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body ; behold I shew you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a mo-*

† v. 43, &c. 51, &c.

ment,

*ment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed; for THIS corruptible must put on incorruption, and THIS mortal must put on immortality; if the manifest import of these texts can be evaded, so may the most studied paraphrase, or the most careful illustration of them. There will be no such thing as intelligible language to be found. The case is, the human body undergoes many changes in a course of years, e. g. from infancy to old age, which, I suppose, it will be granted, are the changes of the same body, properly speaking, still. For though it may not be easy to say precisely in what the *ratio* of identity consists, we may safely say, than an almost infinite number of changes and modifications, which might be supposed, do not affect it. There are very few names which have a stronger claim to deference than that of Mr. Bayle; and it is an observation of his, that “there is no saying what the utmost
“human art or contrivance may be able to
“effect; much less what means, even physical
“ones,*

“ ones, God is able to use for the repro-
 “ duction of bodies; of which the *necessary*
 “ *constituent parts* may be. preserved consis-
 “ tently with numberless changes from the
 “ cradle to the grave, and after death.”

Our great Creator at least knows what properly constitutes identity much better than we can tell him; and therefore without entering fully into the state of the controversy as maintained long ago by Dr. *Stillingfleet* and Mr. *Locke*, (which would be little better than continuing a *game of words*,) I shall content myself with pointing out to you one or two instances of cavil, and quibble, and captiousness in the latter, which plainly enough indicate him to have been galled in many places, and are indeed altogether unworthy both of himself and his argument.

The Bishop, in vindication of his own and the catholic tenet, cites these words of our blessed Saviour, *all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.*

“ From hence, says Mr. L., your Lordship

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“ argues

“ argues, that these words, *all that are in the*
 “ *grave*, relate to no other substance than
 “ what was united to the Soul in life; be-
 “ cause a different substance cannot be said
 “ to be in the graves, and to come out of
 “ them. Which words of your Lordship,
 “ if they prove any thing, prove that the
 “ Soul too is lodged in the grave, and raised
 “ out of it at the last day. For your Lord-
 “ ship says, *can a different substance be said to*
 “ *be in the graves, and come out of them?* So
 “ that according to this interpretation of
 “ these words of our Saviour, no other sub-
 “ stance being raised but what hears his
 “ voice, but what, being called, comes out
 “ of the grave; and no other substance com-
 “ ing out of the grave, but what was in the
 “ grave; any one must conclude, that the
 “ Soul, unless it be in the grave, will make
 “ no part of the person that is raised, unless,
 “ as your Lordship argues against me, you
 “ can make it out, that a substance which
 “ never was in the grave, may come out of
 “ it; or that the Soul is no substance.” *But

* Ibid.

will

will not this sophistical bubble burst in an instant before a most simple consideration, pursued through its necessary consequences? By a common figure, and agreeably to the customary license of speech, we talk of the acts, or operations of one of the two constituent parts of man, as of the acts or operations of the whole. E. G. *No soul sees me; or no body sees me; every soul heard him; or no body heard him;* are expressions used indiscriminately, not only in ordinary discourse, but in correct composition. The soul perceives the *voice*; the body is raised by divine power, and reunited to it. (*bb*)

Again: The learned prelate quotes the following words of the Apostle, in support of the doctrine of the *resurrection* as it is held in the Church. *We must all appear before the judgmentseat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* To which his Lordship subjoins this question: CAN THESE WORDS BE UNDER-

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STOOD OF ANY OTHER MATERIAL SUBSTANCE BUT THAT BODY IN WHICH THESE THINGS WERE DONE? "A man, " Mr. L. answers, may suspend his determining the meaning of the Apostle to be, " that a sinner shall suffer for his sins in the " *very same body* in which he committed " them : because St. *Paul* does not say he " shall have the *very same body* when he suffers, that he had when he sinned. The " Apostle says indeed, done *in his body*. The " body he had, and did things in at five, or " fifteen, was, no doubt, *his body*, as much " as that which he did things in at fifty was " *his body*, though *his body* were not the *very* " *same body* at those different ages : and so " will the body, which he shall have AFTER " the *resurrection*, be *his body*, though it be " not the *very same* with that which he had " at five, at fifteen, or fifty." * Now agreeing with Mr. L. and the admirers of his doctrine upon this head, that " the body which a man " shall have *after* the resurrection," according to their scheme, (for what shall be done *in*

* Ibid.

or

or *at* it, we are left to conjecture,) I say, agreeing with them, that this body will be *his body*, yet we would fain know in what sense he could be said to *receive the things done* IN IT, or BY IT, according to another reading. A man has *his body* truly, if not numerically the same through life, under a greater or less variety of changes and modifications; but by Mr. L's train of reasoning, it should seem that a man may have *his body* before he is in possession of it. Had the Apostle said, as a man sins in *a* body, so he shall suffer in *a* body, Mr. L's mode of arguing might have been admitted; but as matters stand at present, it has evidently no logic to support it.

Once more. "The next text of Scripture
 "you bring for the same body, says Mr. L.
 "is, *if there be no resurrection of the dead,*
 "*then is not Christ raised.* From which your
 "Lordship argues, IT SEEMS THEN OTHER
 "BODIES ARE TO BE RAISED AS HIS WAS.
 "I grant other dead as certainly raised as

Q₃

" Christ

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“ Christ was ; for else his *resurrection* would
 “ be of no use to mankind. But I do not see
 “ how it follows, that they shall be raised
 “ with the *same* body, as your Lordship in-
 “ fers in these words annexed ; AND CAN
 “ THERE BE ANY DOUBT, WHETHER HIS
 “ BODY WAS THE SAME MATERIAL SUB-
 “ STANCE WHICH WAS UNITED TO HIS
 “ SOUL BEFORE ? I answer, none at all ;
 “ nor that it had just the same distinguished
 “ lineaments and marks, yea and the same
 “ wounds that it had at the time of his death.
 “ If therefore your Lordship will argue from
 “ other bodies being raised as his was, that
 “ they must have proportion with his in
 “ SAMENESS, then we must believe, that
 “ every man shall be raised with the same
 “ lineaments and other notes of distinction
 “ he had at the time of his death, even with
 “ his wounds yet open, if he had any, be-
 “ cause our Saviour was so raised ; which
 “ seems to be scarce reconcilable with what
 “ your Lordship says, of A FAT MAN
 “ FALLING INTO A CONSUMPTION, AND
 “ DYING.” *

* Ibid.

The

The wit here is not worth answering ; and the fallacy of the paragraph was obviated in some of the foregoing observations. Suffice it to remark that the addition of one word in its *proper* place would have demolished all this fine fabric of reasoning. Mr. L. should have granted, that other *dead* and BURIED shall “as certainly be raised as Christ was.” In short, we affirm, on Scriptural authority, that at the *last day* the *bodies* of men shall really be raised. The article of the *resurrection* in our Creeds requires only this belief. We are neither concerned in niceties of conjecture, nor obliged to adopt Mr. L’s. notion of identity. (cc)

But to return to Dr. S. I admit that this learned writer has speciously enough reconciled a text or two * to his favourite tenet, which have been generally referred to the received doctrine. But shall plausibility be obtruded upon us for demonstration ? Shall it overturn the credit of other interpretations

* See particularly Rom. viii. 11.

of the same passages, more solid perhaps, or at least equally ingenious? Shall it supersede the authority of a very great number of texts too clear and explicit to be opposed by any thing but general assertions, bold denials, flat contradictions, and the artifice of subtilization? Shall it shake the faith of ages, and nullify the doctrine of the catholic Church?

And, after all, in this, as in the case of the *Trinity*, we are in effect only called upon to exchange one Creed for another. These *squeamish* Gentlemen who know not how to digest the *wholsome* doctrines of the Gospel, expect us to swallow with *greediness* a kind of spiritual *Nostrum*, prepared by human imagination. It is true, Dr. S. with all the effrontery of *quackery*, would make us believe his *dose* may be taken without any sort of inconvenience. For he roundly asserts, that “the *resurrection of the dead* is no ways liable to any of the difficulties which the other notion MAY be liable to.” Now whatever difficulties

difficulties our notion *may* be liable to, I ask, whether that of the Doctor has not at first sight its *peculiar* difficulties? Indeed it will stand clear of all, if we answer the following queries suitably to the confidence with which he proposes them. “ May there not be a
 “ *resurrection of the dead*, says he, without
 “ *the resurrection of flesh*? May not the dead
 “ person be raised to life, and have a *body*
 “ given to him, suitable to the place he is
 “ to have? May not the *thinking conscious*
 “ person be restored, though he has not that
 “ restored which has no thought, nor consci-
 “ ousness belonging to it?” To the first of
 these three questions I answer absolutely—
 No. — A *resurrection of the dead*, supposes a
resurrection of flesh. To the second and third
 I make free to reply with a few questions in
 my turn; and desire to ask, whether, when
 the *graves and the sea shall give up the dead*,
 they will not give up what was *put into them*?
 Was this the *body*, or was it the *soul*? Or,
 if by a *resurrection of the dead* we are only to
 understand our being invested with a *new*
body,

body, with what shadow of sense is this styled a *resurrection*? Or, if there is sense and propriety in the term, may we not fairly ask, from whence is *this body to come*? (dd) If *thought*, or *consciousness* constitutes person, can *thought or consciousness* die? If not, what are we to understand by “a thinking conscious person’s being restored?” Restored! From whence? Or to what? (ee) In short, whatever becomes of man after death, whatever may be the nature of the intermediate state, what notion can we form of *thought’s rising from the dead*, or the *resurrection of consciousness*? Men will advance inconsistencies, and assert paradoxes sooner than believe as the Church would have them. (ff)

This notion of a *thinking person’s being restored* does indeed correspond well enough with an opinion maintained with much earnestness some years since by certain Divines,* who held, that during the state between death and the last day, the soul will *sleep*, as

* Dr. Law. Mr. Peckard, &c.

it' were, and all the rational powers be suspended. I shall not enter into the merits of their arguments. It will be sufficient to say; that these writers supposed the reunion of the Soul to the body at the day of judgment; and consequently, according to their notion, (for argument's sake admitting it,) the *restoration of the Soul* to its powers, &c. and the *resurrection of the dead*, are very different things.

Again: if we believe the Apostle's account, the instantaneous change which is to be effected in us at the *resurrection* will be from *natural* to *spiritual*, from *corruptible* to *incorruptible*; but we shall look in vain for such a change under any other hypothesis. They who insist, that our souls shall be united to *new bodies* may be allowed to suppose such bodies will be *spiritual*, as St. Paul speaks, and *incorruptible*; but will they not be hard put to it to prove that *these* ever were *natural*, or *corruptible*? Or does this Apostle's illustration of the doctrine before us by the similitude of seed sown, which *is not quickened except it die*, convey the least idea
of

of a soul's awaking from sleep, and in a moment as it were recovering the use of all its faculties? Surely this cannot be the *mystery* which the inspired writer *shews* us in this chapter. But, according to our sense, the Apostolical comparison is as apt and happy as possible. The *bare grain* is *sown*, dissolves, and appears again under a new modification. *So also is the resurrection of the dead.* The body is *sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body*; a body subtilized and purified; a body disencumbered from that *flesh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, and, to adopt the high figuring of St. Paul, *clothed upon with an house from heaven*, and arrayed with *immortality*. And, all this while, in both cases, *God giveth a body as it pleaseth him, and to every seed, and to every individual, his own body.*

The

The learned authors we are concerned with, and their numerous admirers, seem to have forgot, or to wish us to forget, that they hold opinions declared to be heretical, and condemned as such by an inspired Apostle. The author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* numbers the *resurrection of the dead* among the *principles of the doctrine of Christ*. * What was the precise tenet of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* who asserted that the *Resurrection is past already*, we cannot learn from the Apostle who so severely censures them. But he describes them to be persons who *concerning the truth had erred*, and *overthrown the faith of some*. It is reasonably to be presumed, that they, as well as the old heretics, *Basilides*, *Carpocrates*, *Menander*, *Valentinus*, &c. and the *Anabaptists* and *Libertines* of later ages, (as I find them called,) denied the *resurrection of the body* on much the same grounds as their successors in this heterodoxy. It has been boldly maintained, that by the *resurrection of the dead* we are only to understand

* Heb. vi. 1, 2.

a resur-

a *resurrection* from *sin* to a state of *grace*; or a kind of *resurrection* from *ignorance* to a *knowledge* of truth; or, in general, the immortality of the Soul. *Libertini*, says *Calvin*, as quoted by Arch-bishop *Laud*, *rident spem omnem quam de resurrectione habemus, idque jam nobis evenisse dicunt, quod adhuc expectamus, &c. ut homo sciat animam suam spiritum immortalem esse viventem in cælis*. And says *Peter Martyr*, as cited by the same prelate, *sunt etiam hodie Libertini qui eam irident, et resurrectionem quæ tractatur in Scripturis tantum ad animas referunt*. The *Gnostics* and *Valentinians* affirmed the flesh to be incapable of incorruption. *Carnis salutem negant*, says *Irenæus*, *dicentes non eam esse capacem incorruptibilitatis*. *Menander* had the impudence to annex the privilege of immortality to his Baptism. And among others, probably the *Corinthian* converts affirmed the *Resurrection of the dead* imported no more than a *renovation of life and manners*, a *newness of life*, as *St. Paul* expresses it; and thus they absurdly confounded figure with letter, or a type with its antitype.

We

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We should now see, for full satisfaction's sake, what the sense of the primitive Church was with respect to the doctrine before us; but this enquiry affording ample matter for distinct consideration must be reserved accordingly.

DIS-

DISCOURSE VIII.

1 C O R. Chapter 15. Verse 12.

If Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead ?

THAT the doctrine of the *Resurrection of the body* was taught by the Apostles and by our Lord we have already seen ; and that the Apostolical Fathers maintained it with the same precision will presently appear.

“ Let us consider, says St. *Clement* in his
“ first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, how the
“ Lord does continually shew us that there
“ shall be a future *resurrection* ; of which he
R “ has

“ has made our Lord *Jefus Chrift* the FIRST
 “ FRUITS, raising him from the dead. Let
 “ us contemplate, beloved, the *refurrection*
 “ that is continually made before our eyes.
 “ Let us behold the fruits of the earth.
 “ Every one fees how the feed is fown. The
 “ fower goes forth, and cafts it upon the
 “ earth; and the feed which when it was
 “ fown fell upon the earth dry and naked, in
 “ time diffolves; and from the diffolution
 “ the great power of the Providence of the
 “ Lord raifes it again; and of one feed many
 “ arife, and bring forth fruit.”

This paffage is almoft a direct comment
 on the 36th. and two following verfes of the
 15th. Chapter of St. *Paul's* firft Epiftle to
 the *Corinthians*. St. *Clement*, it muft be con-
 fefled, is not fo happy in his elucidation of
 the doctrine of the *refurrection of the body*
 from the fupposed death and revivifcence of
 the *Phœnix* from his own afhes, according to
 a current opinion in thofe days; the enlarge-
 ment on which fabulous wonder has drawn
 a charge of unguinenefs on the Epiftle it-
 felf.

self. But the judicious Editor and Translator in his preliminary discourse vindicates the good *Father*, and rescues the work from this imputation in a most satisfactory manner; so that "with serious and ingenuous minds," (to borrow his own words,) this is a matter which will reflect no discredit on St. *Clement's* doctrine, or on the pious zeal with which he maintained it. The reality of the doctrine is in no wise affected by the whimsicalness, or the weakness of the illustration.

"He that raised up *Christ* from the dead,
 "shall also raise up us in like manner, if we
 "do his will," says *Polycarp* to the *Philippians*.

Ignatius assures the *Trallians* in the most positive terms, that "as *Jesus Christ* was truly
 "crucified and dead, so he was also truly
 "raised from the dead by his Father, *after*
 "*the same manner as he* will also raise up us
 "who believe in him." (gg)

The following extract from St. *Clement's* second Epistle to the *Corinthians* is at least as

R 2

full

full and exprefs as the paffage a little above quoted from the firft. “ Let not any one
 “ among you fay, that this very flefh is not
 “ judged, neither raifed up. Confider, in
 “ what were ye faved, in what did ye look
 “ up, if not whilft you were in this flefh ?
 “ We muft therefore keep our flefh as the
 “ temple of God. For in like manner as ye
 “ were called in the flefh, ye fhall alfo come
 “ to judgment in the flefh.” (*bb*)

And yet all this evidence fhall shrink into nothing before a little ready confidence, and unceremonious decifion. For thus fays the Author of the *Inquiry*. “ If we pafs from the
 “ New Testament, *Barnabas* and *Clemens* of
 “ *Rome* mention no more than the *refurrec-*
 “ *tion*; and not any particular *modus* of it,
 “ or the *refurrektion of the flefh*: vide *Barna-*
 “ *bas*, ch. xxi. *Clemens*, ch. xxiv. *Clemens*
 “ indeed, in his fecond Epiftle, mentions the
 “ *refurrektion of the flefh*; but that is allowed
 “ not to be genuine. *Ignatius* too fpeaks as
 “ the Scriptures do. *Ep. ad Trall*. And in
 “ the larger Epiftle to the *Ephefians*, he fpeaks
 “ of

“ of the resurrection *ἐκ νεκρῶν*, *from the dead* ;
 “ but he never mentions any thing of a re-
 “ *surrection of the flesh.*”

Now if the passages I produced from St. *Clement's* first Epistle, and from *Ignatius*, do not to all intents and purposes assert the *resurrection of the body*, or of the *flesh* ; if St. *Clement's* second Epistle must absolutely be pronounced spurious, because the learned world is divided in its sentiments relative to it ; if the doctrine contained in this Epistle cannot possibly be agreeable to that of the other, or to that of *Ignatius*, or to that of the Apostolical and primitive Church, because it is a matter of some doubt who the author might be ; if these reverend fathers speak in *no* place of the *resurrection of the body* because in *some* places they speak of the *resurrection of the dead*, or of the *resurrection* in general, as the holy Scripture itself occasionally does ; if this be the case, equivocation shall hereafter pass for argument, and dogmaticalness for demonstration.

One should be apt to think, that the nearer the fountain, the clearer the stream; or, in plain terms, that the most antient Christians are the most orthodox; that those who lived in, or nearest to the times of the Apostles, and Apostolical men, were like to understand their doctrine with readiness, to embrace it with veneration, and to transmit it in purity. What can be more clear than the language of *Justin Martyr*, as it is quoted by Dr. S. himself? "*Christ shall come a second time, when τα σωματα ανα-*" "*γερει παντων των γενομενων ανθρωπων, he shall raise*" "*the bodies of all men that have been?*" Well; but says our author, "this was *Justin's* opinion, but it was not in any *Baptismal*" "*Creed*; he takes no notice of any article "*of any Creed as containing the notion of*" "*the resurrection of the flesh*, whatsoever his "*own philosophical notion of the resurrec-*" "*tion might be.*"

Will it follow then that the doctrine of the *resurrection of the flesh* was purely the personal, or philosophical notion of *Justin Martyr*,

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Martyr, because it was not in his time an article in any *Creed*? If so, it will follow, by parity of arguing, that almost all the other articles of our present *Creeeds* were the private tenets or opinions of particular persons, and not the common doctrine, or belief of the catholic Church. This must follow upon Dr. S's own principles. For he has himself remarked in his preface, that "it is highly probable these, (referring to doctrines he had been mentioning,) and other doctrines were taught, (*viz.* after baptism,) as circumstances arose, either to explain some things inculcated in the Gospels, or to avoid something erroneous. And hence it was that the *original Creed* was enlarged, and more things inserted into it; and indeed all that has been added to it seems to have been owing to these causes." The just now cited declaration of *Justin Martyr* is therefore to be regarded as exactly coincident with a doctrine publickly received, and not as the bare result of his own judgment, for any thing Dr. S. has said, or proved to the contrary. But if so, the doctrine of the

R 4

Resurrection

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Resurrection of the body, or of the *flesh*, was an article of faith from the beginning ; and its subsequent date as an article of any *Creed* is a circumstance of very inferior consideration. What matters it to us *when* it was thought necessary to be required of the members of the Church of *Christ* openly to profess they believed as the Apostles and primitive Christians did ?

But let me shew you how unfairly the author of the *Enquiry* deals by *Polycarp*. Of the two places in this *father's* epistle to the *Philippians* in which mention is made of the *resurrection*, the principal, I think, is that I not long since quoted, and will here lay again before you. *He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also raise up us in like manner*. The words *in like manner* are by the no less faithful than judicious translator printed in *Italics*, as not been literally contained, though necessarily implied in the original. This passage then, like many more parallel ones which I have had occasion to produce, I mean, from the Scripture itself, manifestly imports

imports the *resurrection of the body*; though should any person affect to doubt what the good *father's* meaning may be *here*, they may soon learn what his idea of the *resurrection* was, from a part of the prayer he preferred to God in the hour of his martyrdom, according to the account we have of it in the circular epistle of the Church of *Smyrna*. He *there* makes mention of the *resurrection* both of *soul* and *body*. For though the *soul* cannot, properly speaking, be said to *rise again*, yet as the soul and body constitute the same man, as these constituent parts are separated by death, and reunited at the *resurrection*, this reunion is not unfitly expressed by a term that may be truly predicated of one of the constituent parts.

Dr. S. admits the genuineness of the above-mentioned narrative; and yet will not suffer us to consider the *letter* in one place to be an explanation of the *sense* in the other. There is more of art than honesty in an attempt to slip out of this difficulty by saying, as the *Enquirer* does in the following words,
that

that “by the time this letter was wrote, the
 “notion seems to have prevailed among
 “Christians, that the *body* was to be raised,
 “though it was not yet got into any of their
 “Creeds.” This is a sort of spiritual juggle
 which inverts truth, and disguises it in the
 same instant : it metamorphoses the real sen-
 timent of *Polycarp* into a whimsical notion
 which began to gain ground in the Church !

But this matter may be viewed in another
 light. The force of truth has drawn from
 our author an involuntary cession of his own
 darling point. For immediately after the
 sentence last cited from him, he acquaints us,
 that “soon after the middle of the second
 “century disputes arose about the *resurrec-*
 “*tion* ; the *beatbens* objecting to the possibi-
 “lity of it, and the CHRISTIANS endea-
 “vouring to answer the objections they met
 “with. The enquiry, says he, was, whe-
 “ther there was to be a *resurrection* of the
 “*soul* alone, or of the whole man consisting
 “of body and soul ? And then a second
 “question was, whether the *flesh*, the *very*
 “*flesh*

“ *flesh* which we now bear about us, was to
 “ be raised up again? The WRITERS of
 “ that time still extant contended for the *re-*
 “ *surrection of the flesh* together with the soul.
 “ But there does not appear to be any *Creed*
 “ which established such a doctrine. For
 “ whatever PRIVATE PERSONS might ima-
 “ gine to be true, was not instantly to be
 “ *professed* as an article of faith, necessary to
 “ be believed in order to Baptism.” And af-
 terwards he tells us, that “ the controversy
 “ about the *resurrection of the flesh* did not
 “ begin till the middle, or near the end of
 “ the second century. And then as philo-
 “ sophers objected to the *resurrection ITSELF*,
 “ from the common topics, *how could FLESH*
 “ *devoured by beasts or fishes, and thus become*
 “ *PARTS of those animals; or perhaps reduced*
 “ *by fire to ashes, or dispersed by seas and rivers,*
 “ *be restored?* *Athenagoras, Theophilus, and*
 “ *Tertullian* undertook a defence of this no-
 “ tion; and taught, that it was no ways be-
 “ yond the power of Almighty God to
 “ restore to every one the flesh he once
 “ had.” * (ii)

* Enquiry &c. p. 18.

Now

Now I desire to observe, in the first place, that these philosophers objected to the *resurrection* from the common topics just mentioned because they were the strongest that occurred to them; and because when they objected to the *resurrection of the body*, they most unquestionably meant to object to the *resurrection* ITSELF. In the next place, I would remark, that if by the CHRISTIANS, who endeavoured to answer the objections of heathens, and by the WRITERS of *that time*, we are to understand only a few PRIVATE PERSONS who maintained an extraordinary opinion; if *Athenagoras*, and *Theophilus*, and *Tertullian* did no more than defend their own personal tenets; it is passing strange these same heathen philosophers should set their *wits* against them at all; and stranger still, that the whole body of Christians had not joined the outcry in their own vindication, and in public disavowal of an enthusiastic and ridiculous principle. Nay this is not all. The doctrine of the *resurrection of the body*, if it was a mere private or personal opinion, was in fact contrary to the Gospel of *Christ*,
and

and the sense of the Church ; and therefore must have been regarded as a most gross, if not dangerous heresy. But as it most undoubtedly was never represented so to be, we are to conclude, I presume, that it was true and catholic doctrine, notwithstanding its non-appearance in any Creed, in the early ages, and though the acknowledgement of it was not a qualification for Baptism. We therefore insist, that whenever it became an article of a *baptismal Creed*, it was inserted with the most admissible pretensions.

It is, farther, very observable, that the doctrine of the *resurrection of the body* is most expressly taught in many places of the *Koran* of *Mahomet*. Let us turn to a few. “ *Man*
 “ *saith, says Mahomet, after I have been dead,*
 “ *shall I really be brought forth alive from the*
 “ *grave? Doth not man remember that we*
 “ *created him heretofore when he was nothing?*
 “ *The unbelievers say, when we and our fa-*
 “ *thers shall have been reduced to dust, shall we*
 “ *be taken from the grave? Man saith, who shall*
 “ *restore bones to life when they are rotten? An-*
 “ *swer, he shall restore them to life, who produced*
 “ *them*

“ *them the first time.*” (kk) The whole system of *Mahometism* is, you well know, a superstructure raised upon the foundations of *Judaism* and *Christianity*. The grand aim of the impostor seems to have been to concentrate both in one faith; with which view, and that no romantic one, he in part adopted, and partly rejected the respective theories. In order to ingratiate himself with the *Jews*, he asserted, as we have seen, even to an extremity of zeal, the unity of the Godhead; and at the same time not to put the *Christians* out of all temper, as he frequently takes occasion to speak respectfully of *Jesus Christ*, so he declares probably in the most explicit terms for the great article we have been discussing. (ll) We may therefore fairly conclude from this circumstance only, that the doctrine of the *resurrection of the body* was not the sentiment of a few individuals, but the profession of the universal Church at the beginning of the seventh century. And after all, supposing it to be questionable whether this were really the plan of *Mahomet*, the least that can be inferred from the perspicuity

perspicuity with which the doctrine of the *resurrection* is taught and enforced in the *Koran*, is that he conceived it, to be sufficiently reconcileable with the common reason and apprehension of mankind; at the same time that, from this among other particulars, we must see, and must desire its adversaries to take notice, that it is not a doctrine peculiar to Christianity.

To come now to the *conclusion of the whole matter*. If *these things are so*, if the great doctrines we have been handling are defensible upon sound principles, and have a most firm foundation in Scripture, and in primitive authority, abundant reason have we to *hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering*; in nothing dismayed by adversaries who trifle with us upon the most serious subjects; who render the word of God of none effect, by perverse interpretation; who cannot, or will not see the plain sense of the plainest expressions; who will not acknowledge *Jesus Christ* to be the Creator of the world though *all things were made by him*;
or

or that he made satisfaction for sin, though *he was sacrificed for us, and gave his life a ransom for all.* I know not any thing that can equal this stubbornness and slowness of heart except the insolence of such as gravely tell us, we must not hope to propagate the Gospel among *Jews, Mahometans*, or heathens, while the strange doctrines contained in our Creeds are retained in the Church. Is not this to all intents and purposes saying, we must not hope to eradicate infidelity till we have renounced the capital articles of our belief; or, in other words, must not expect to make converts to Christianity, till we cease to be Christians? And indeed so inconsiderable are the impediments to a spiritual coalition between the followers of *Socinus* and the disciples of *Mahomet*, that, according to information given us by writers of credit, terms of union and amity were actually proposed by the former to the latter in the last century.* That men should admit the mysterious truths of holy Writ upon rational grounds, or that they should reject them upon what they call rational grounds,

* See Mr. Jones's *Introduc. Disc.* p. 4. Note.

we may readily enough comprehend; but there seems to be something unaccountably romantic in an attempt to compromise matters as it were with the author of our faith by accommodating these truths to the human understanding.

But whatever may be the views, or whatever the claims, or whatever the pretences of Latitudinarians in general, the notion of a *Creed*, or a system, or an establishment respecting the great doctrines we have been considering, occurs to us in a manner spontaneously. In the Church of *Christ*, the only question ought to be, not whether a *confession*, a *formulary*, or a series of *articles*, be long or short, simple or circumstantial, antient or modern, but whether it has its grounds in competent authority. (*mm*) If the doctrines of the *Trinity* and of the *Resurrection*, as they are held in the Church, be scriptural doctrines, no more objection can justly lie against the *Nicene*, or the *Athanasian Creed*, than against that of Dr. S. This author not only admits but refers to an *original Creed*, which he observes has been

S enlarged

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enlarged “as circumstances arose,” or occasions called; though that it has been enlarged in some instances beyond all reason he strongly insists, with many *others with him*. But be this as it may, and even if *these things* were not *so* as we have represented them, it is abundantly sufficient that they appear to be *so* to us. No rule, no system, no establishment whatsoever can in any tolerable sense be said to invade the *right of private judgment* in matters of religion; because *Creeds*, formularies, institutions, and appointments in general must be incompatible with the exercise of this right, at all periods of the Christian Church, or at none. It is pleasant enough to remark how *zealously* some will be *affected in a ridiculous thing*; and how vehemently they will *beat the air* in their contention for that *right of private judgment*, which is indeed unalienable; and in fact is exercised by those who submit to what may be called *public*; by men of all persuasions; by *Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics*; by the *Sectaries* of all religions; and by people of no religion at all. (*nn*) “Not Heretics only, says the great *Chillingworth*, but Ro-
 “ *mish*

“ *mish* Catholics also, set up as many judges,
 “ as there are men and women in the Chris-
 “ tian world. For do not your men and wo-
 “ men judge your religion to be true before
 “ they believe it, as well as the men
 “ and women of other religions? Oh! but
 “ you say, *they receive it, not because they*
 “ *think it agreeable to Scripture, but because*
 “ *the Church tells them so.* But then, I hope,
 “ they believe the Church, because their own
 “ reason tells them they are to do so. So that
 “ the difference between a Papist and a Pro-
 “ testant is this, not that the one judges, and
 “ the other does not judge, but that the one
 “ judges his guide to be infallible, the other
 “ his way to be manifest.” The fact is, every
 man’s attachment to any thing, to this or that
 Church, to this party, or to that principle,
 &c. is ultimately resolvable into his opinion
 of its excellence, its truth, its propriety, or
 its expedience; or of its conduciveness on
 the whole to his welfare, comfort, and satis-
 faction, &c; i. e. it is resolvable into his
 own private judgment. This judgment, it is
 true, may be warped by passion, biased by
 prejudice, clouded by ignorance, and blinded

by perverseness ; it may be intoxicated by voluptuousness, enervated by indolence, or inverted by frenzy ; or it may be influenced by wisdom, by folly, or by caprice. But, at the same time, whether we judge well, or ill ; or of whatever differences or degrees human judgment may admit ; we shall strictly and properly be found in all cases and instances to judge for ourselves. (oo)

It was the concurrence of private judgment which first formed the Christian Church ; it was the same concurrence which gradually compounded the enormous mass of popery ; it was the same that effected the *Reformation* ; and it was the same that constituted the numerous sects and parties into which this *Reformation* has been most deplorably split and subdivided. It is to nothing more or less than this that the Church of *England* owes her existence. And upon this ground it is certain, her requisition of assent to her public offices, and of subscription to her *articles*, the measure of just policy, and common prudence for her security, are no more to be regarded

garded as invasions of the *right of private judgment*, than the open attempts, or the secret machinations of her enemies, for her destruction. Upon this ground, in short, her declarations of faith in what she holds to be evangelical truth; and indeed the whole scheme of her doctrine, discipline, and polity, are perfectly intelligible, and manifestly consistent. But is not the inference drawn from the acknowledged *right of private judgment* by a late famous author, and his associates, altogether chimerical, and totally incomprehensible? Their inference is, that every individual Christian may, if he thinks fit, withdraw himself from all the Churches upon the face of the earth, stand absolutely single in the profession of his faith, or, as this author expresses it, be a *Church to himself*.* And is not this in effect to assert, that a Church may be formed without a communion, without government, or ministry; without a possibility of being infected with heresy, or divided by schism? Is it not to all intents and purposes to aver, that a society may subsist without members, without establishment, or

* See Confessional. Ch. 2. p. 34. Note.

constitution? We deny not that a man may judge he has a claim to this spiritual independence; and indeed our principle supposes him so to judge; but then we must beg leave to think in our turn, that he is grossly mistaken in that judgment. (*pp*)

I wish to remark, that if the capital truths of the Gospel are discoverable any where, they are most indisputably to be found in the Catholic Church; the great repository of Christian doctrine. Our blessed Lord's assurances of superintendency, support, and protection are out of all question given to his disciples, and to believers in general, as to a body, or society. *Upon this rock, says he, I will build my Church, &c. Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* When he promised his Apostles that he would send the *Holy Spirit* to them, who should *guide them into all truth*, he must necessarily mean that truth which they were to communicate to their successors, and these to others, and so on, through all generations. When the sacred penmen speak of the *truth*,
or

or the *faith*, &c. they undoubtedly speak of the truth embraced, and the faith professed by all sound Christians ; and when St. *Paul* exhorts the *Corinthians* to *examine* themselves, and to *prove* themselves, *whether* they were in the *faith*, he most certainly means the faith of the catholic Church. In a word, we must look for spiritual truth in its native simplicity, though we *search* for it as for *hid treasures* ; we must look for it within the pale of some communion or other : which surely will be acknowledged by every man, who does not, in defiance of Scripture, and in contempt of all the world, suppose that the infallibility which he justly denies to appertain to any Church upon earth, is really and truly lodged in himself.

The principle of the *Confessional* leads, we apprehend, to these absurd consequences ; but at the same time we assert no *dominion* over the *faith*, or the consciences of others ; we leave every one to *stand or fall to his own master* ; we conceive, that, by the immutable constitution of things, every one will think
and

and act for himself, though we imagine all men to be accountable to God as well for their opinions as for their practices ; we neither do, nor wish to *compel* men to *come in* that our Church *may be filled*, persuaded as we are at the same time that this Church is, in respect of all essentials, an apostolical one ; that she *holds fast the things which become sound doctrine*, and teaches the *words of eternal life*.

It may with great truth be affirmed, that the Church of *England* asserts the *right of private judgment* in the same sense, and to the same latitude that every party or body of Protestants does. For how does the management of the several leaders and teachers of the Sectaries accord with this universally avowed principle ? How do *they* leave men to their own judgments in matters of religion ? Do *they* not find ways and means to become masters of the understandings, and the consciences of their followers ; and accomplish that by indirect artifice which they load us with obloquy for doing under the sanction of lawful authority ? The fact is, in case of superiority,

riority, any sect that you may name would think itself, not barely empowered, but bound to strengthen and secure itself by legal fences and establishments, and by authoritative constitutions ; i. e. by those very means and methods against which it now so vehemently exclaims. Experience will justify our supposition that such would be the case ; as we know the most considerable branch of the *Dissenters* to have changed its language, and its sentiments, with its situation. The first article of the memorable *solemn League and Covenant* declares the intention of its framers to be, to “ *bring the Churches of God in*
“ *the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction*
“ *and uniformity in religion,* CONFESSION OF
“ FAITH, FORM OF CHURCH-GOVERN-
“ MENT, and DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP
“ and CATECHISING ; *that they and their*
“ *posterity after them might as brethren live in*
“ *faith and love.*”

It is pleasant enough to observe, that, notwithstanding the fine flourishes and colourings of certain authors, who plausibly profess

profess themselves to be advocates for the common rights and privileges of Christians, we find them sometimes driven out of their track by the irresistible force of truth, and insensibly advancing, or admitting ecclesiastical notions : we find them after all their efforts and struggles to climb over the pale of the Church, unwarily, or rather unavoidably slipping back, as I may say, into her fold, and undermining their own principles. The words of a late famous prelate* upon this subject will verify the observation. “ As it “ is absurd, says he, to suppose that any man “ can be saved by the faith of another, or “ by any belief but what is truly his own ; “ so there is no possible method of having a “ faith of his own, properly so called, without building it entirely upon what appears “ right to his own judgment, such as it is, “ after his best endeavours for INFORMATION.” That is to say, in other words, a man cannot properly be said to judge for *himself* till he has received information, or instruction from *others*. In short, let privileges be as sacred, or consciences as tender

* Bp. Hoadley.

as you please, I affirm that the erection and establishment of a national Church, whether the doctrines she teaches are in themselves orthodox or otherwise, true or false, is as fairly defensible upon rational and protestant grounds, as the institution of any religious sect, or society whatsoever.

True it is that men, inflamed with false zeal, or misled by wrong judgment, may depart both from protestant and Christian principles; and at their peril it will be. The Church of *Rome* endeavoured to extirpate what she *called heresy* by the very same means which in early days Paganism employed for the overthrow of the Christian faith itself. And what was the consequence? The inhumanity of persecution afforded to every thinking mind a very strong argument of the corruption of that Church in which it was countenanced; it frightened men *into* their *Senses*; it helped to open their understandings; and Popery may upon the matter be said to have been burnt out of the kingdom. I undertake not to prove, that in our own
Church

Church zeal has always been sufficiently governed by prudence, or tempered with charity. There is no occasion to recur to a few disagreeable instances, or the transactions of untoward times. But, I trust, I shall be abundantly warranted in asserting, that he who at this day shall charge the Church of *England*, or any considerable number of her members, with a want of due moderation, *knows not of what manner of Spirit we are of*. And yet, if the author of the *Confessional* is to be credited, we are relapsing gradually into Popery, both in our doctrines and our practices. We are given to understand, in the seventh Chap. of that work, that “Some competent observers have grounds for more than a suspicion, that the Church of *England* has been, and still is, though by degrees imperceptible to vulgar eyes, edging back once more towards Popery.” Sure these *observers* are much more *sharp-sighted* than their neighbours! I do not well know what these Gentlemen are afraid of; but I know true Christianity to be most in danger from the diametrically opposite quarter; not
so

so much from men of too great, as from people of too *little faith* ; not so much from the triple-mitre of the *Roman* pontiff, as from the many-headed *hydra* of infidelity. The truth of the matter is, the author before us and his friends do not speak out, as our *open enemies* have done, and as themselves were called upon to do, by every maxim of justice, candor, and generosity. They are in no dread of *fire* and *faggot* ; they are offended, not by the *discipline*, but by certain doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, which we hold in common with her, (even the *doctrines* I have been defending,) and which they most insidiously and industriously labour to confound with the absurdities which are justly had in derision, or in abhorrence among us, and of which the credit visibly diminishes every day. Errors may be grafted upon the stock of truth ; which in itself is not the less pure, or the less amiable, because it may be *bolden* in folly as well as in *unrighteousness*. To an ardent longing to see these common doctrines expunged from our *Articles* and *Creeds*, we are unquestionably to ascribe that

profusion

profusion of spleen, malevolence, and rancour with which so many pages, of the *Confessional*, and of other treatises are shamefully defiled. But for these doctrines, I am thoroughly persuaded, the reasonableness, and utility, not to say necessity of Church-establishments, would generally be admitted, and even contended for. That nicety of human wisdom which strains at two or three of our *Articles* could, I am apt to think, well enough digest the remainder of the *thirty nine*. But as matters are circumstanced, the principle I have been combating is far from being an unpopular one. The privilege, or right of private judgment, in the sense of our adversaries, reduces in some sort all men to an equality, and is extremely soothing to vain and to weak minds. The fact is, there is no difficulty in declaiming from standing and specious topics either of eulogy, or invective. An affected zeal for reformation, and an avowed anxiousness for the revival of gospel simplicity, have a very ingratiating tendency with the bulk of mankind. *Liberty of conscience, Freedom of sentiment, (qq) ecclesiastical*

fastical tyranny, violence of bigotry, arbitrary injunctions, spiritual impositions, &c. are, I grant, expressions sufficiently sonorous and amusing, and may pass with many for argument; though at the same time, *looseness of principle, stubbornness of schism, rankness of heresy, arrogance of self-sufficiency, perverseness of opposition, and petulance of temper, &c.* are phrases which must be allowed by “competent” judges to sound quite as well, and to mean full as much.

To conclude. That there is nothing in the least exceptionable in our whole ecclesiastical system; nothing that might reasonably be retrenched; nothing that could possibly be amended even in our *Articles*, as well as worship, rites, and usages, we by no means affirm: but respectfully leaving *these things* to the consideration of them that *are over us in the Lord*, we utterly deny that there is any thing fundamentally wrong, or essentially erroneous in our spiritual constitution. (rr) Men may be, and we find them to be bigots in the cause of infidelity; nor
can

can it afford the least matter of wonder, if no regard is paid to the complaints, or rather the *railing accusations* of such as under fair shews and pretences have manifestly *evil will at Sion*; and while they profess themselves to be actuated by the *Spirit of liberty*, appear to be really possessed with the *Dæmon of licentiousness*. I profess I see not what we can do for, or with these determined enemies of our holy faith except praying, in the spirit of *fervent charity*, that God would be pleased “to bring them into the way of truth.” *The Spirit speaketh expressly*, says St. Paul, *that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and doctrines of devils.* * This passage cannot possibly be considered as a dead letter; and therefore it infinitely concerns ALL persons “diligently to try and examine themselves,” in order to their moral assurance that it does not in any sense or degree touch THEIR spiritual state. In general however, under a conviction that we are ourselves in the *good and the right way*, it will be our duty, as Mem-

* 1 Tim. iv. 1.

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bers of the Church to wish, and as Christians to pray, that God would “have mercy
“upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Here-
“tics; that he would take from them all
“ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt
“of his word; and so fetch them home to
“his flock, that they may be saved among
“the remnant of the true Israelites, and be
“made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus
“Christ our Lord.”

T

A N N O-

ANNOTATIONS.

Page 2. (a) or *misconstrued*.] Controversy in general may be said to subsist in a great measure by the pliancy of composition. *Christopher Davenport*, a *Franciscan*, in a paraphrase, or exposition of the *thirty-nine articles*, makes them all capable of a *Roman-Catholic* sense; and *Raynardus*, a *Roman* likewise, by a perverse interpretation, converts every article of the *Apostolic Creed* into heresy or blasphemy. The design of the latter is obvious enough. I do not recollect to whom I am indebted for these particulars. In like manner Dr. *Waterland* acquaints us, that *Franciscus*, abbot of St. *Clare*, contrived to reconcile our *thirty-nine articles* to the doctrine of the Council of *Trent*, “by
“dint of great dexterity, and most amazing sub-
“tilty,” as the learned Doctor expresses it.

With respect to religious questions, the *Romanists*, in derision of the principles and pretensions of

T 2

Protestants,

Protestants, and by way of proof of the necessity of ecclesiastical interposition, have all along called the Scriptures *mortuum atramentum*, "dumb judges," &c. and assimilate the same to a "nose of wax," to represent their susceptibility of any sense it may suit us to put upon them; though at the same time none more than themselves endeavour to make advantage of their versatility. This is apparent in many instances; *e. g.* in their constructions of those texts by which they pretend to prove the doctrine of *extreme-unction*, of a *purgatory*, &c.

The applications of Scripture made by the *Roman Canonists* are serio-ridiculous; if I may so say, beyond all conception. They will prove the two-fold power of the Pope from the *two swords* which the Apostles had when "Christ was seized by "Judas." Christ said to *Peter*, *Feed my sheep* in general, not such or such a flock; from whence it has been inferred, that the Pope, as successor to that Apostle, is to be acknowledged the universal Pastor, &c, &c.

JEWEL'S *Defence of the apology of the Church of England*. part 4th. p. 473, &c. Translation of JURIEU'S *continuation of the accom. of the Scripture prophecies*. p. 52. Dr. WATERLAND'S *Importance of the doctrine of the Holy Trin.* p. 211, 363, &c.

Page 4. (*b*) *Such an authority.*] It is much on the same principle that the Papists, as *Chillingworth* remarks, in order to ground the belief of the Trinity

Trinity, &c. in the Church's infallibility, roundly deny that this great doctrine can be proved, either from Scripture, or by "consent of the ancient fathers." This, as that great author observes, is "doing the principal and proper work of the *Soci-nians* for them." I find the following extract from the *Racovian Catechism*, made by the anonymous author of *Four Treatises concerning the Doctrine, &c. of the Mahometans*:—*Sententia eorum, qui Christo naturam divinam tribuunt, est repugnans non solum sanæ rationi, verum etiam Divinis Literis, &c.*" Hereunto the author subjoins two other similar passages, the first from *Smalcius*, a famous *Socinian*; and the latter from *Socinus* himself. The words of *Socinus* are these. "*Usque ad tempora CONCILII NICÆNI, et aliquanto post, ut omnium qui tum extitere scriptis liquet, ille unus verus Deus, quem passim sacra testimonia prædicant, solus Pater Jesu Christi est creditus; et qui contrarium sentiunt, ut SABELLIANI et eorum similes, pro hæreticis plane sunt habiti.*"

Let us see then how Bp. *Jewel* manages this matter against his antagonist Mr. *Hardinge*, who, in his pretended confutation of the *Apology for the Church of England*, confidently asserts, that "the Divinity of the Holy Ghost cannot be proved by any express authority from Scripture." We find that illustrious prelate taking the wisest method of putting his adversary to silence and confusion, by producing testimonies and opinions, and not barely

concessions, but strong asseverations of a directly contrary tendency, from the writers of the *Roman Church* itself. One quotation from *Nazianzen* is extremely remarkable, and runs as follows. “*Dicet aliquis non esse scriptum, Spiritum Sanctum esse Deum. Atqui proponetur tibi EXAMEN testimoniorum, ex quibus ostendetur, Divinitatem S. Spi. testatam esse in sacris literis, nisi quis valde insulsus sit, et alienus a Spiritu Sancto.*” In short, the various methods which have been taken by Papists to evince the necessity of admitting the infallibility of the Church, and to discredit the authority of the evangelical writings, are equally scandalous and pitiful. You have them particularly enumerated by an author just now quoted; and it will be sufficient to select one of them, as it is a flagrant one; I mean that of the Cardinal *Perron*, who, in the last century, in order to render the Scriptures suspected and contemptible, asserted, that “some things in them sound like fables, others are apt to raise in the mind indecent and dishonest imaginations, as some expressions in *Solomon’s song*; the history of *Balaam’s Ass* which spoke; and the jaw-bone of an *Ass*; with which *Sampson* slew a thousand *Philistines*.”

CHILLINGWORTH’s *Preface*. Bp. JEWEL’s *Defence*. part 2d. p. 90. Translation of JURIEU’s *Contin.* &c. p. 66. WOLLEBIUS’s *Compend. Theol. Cbrist.* cap. 2. p. 15. TRAVIS’s *Third Letter to Mr. GIBBON*. See SOCINUS

SOCINUS *de Ecclef. p. 345. Four Treatifes, &c. p. 191.*

Page 13. (*c*) *Errors of integrity.*] One of Mr. K.'s arguments, or rather one argument urged by him in the name of his Church, is the following. "Heretics would arise after the Apostles time, and after the writing of Scriptures: these cannot be discovered, condemned, and avoided, unless the Church be infallible; therefore there must be a Church infallible." To which Mr. *Chillingworth* replies in these words. "I pray tell me why cannot heresies be sufficiently discovered, condemned, and avoided by them which believe Scripture to be the rule of faith? If Scripture be sufficient to inform us what is the faith, it must of necessity be also sufficient to teach us what is heresy; seeing heresy is nothing but a manifest deviation from, and an opposition to the faith. That which is straight will plainly teach us what is crooked, and one contrary cannot but manifest the other. If any one should deny that there is a God, that this God is omnipotent, omniscient, good, &c, &c; that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world, and the Son of God; if any man should deny either his birth, his passion, or resurrection, &c; or *sitting at the right hand of God*; his having *all power given him*, &c; that it is he whom God hath appointed to be *Judge of the quick and the dead*; that all men shall rise again at

“ the last day, &c, &c; if a man should hold,
 “ that either the keeping of the *Mosaical* law is
 “ necessary to Salvation; or that *good works* are
 “ not necessary; in a word, if any man should
 “ obstinately contradict the truth of any thing
 “ plainly delivered in Scripture, who does not see
 “ that every one which believes the Scripture hath
 “ sufficient means to discover, and condemn, and
 “ avoid that heresy, without any need of an
 “ infallible guide? If you say, that the *obscure*
 “ *places of Scripture contain matters of faith*, I an-
 “ swer, that it is a matter of faith to believe that
 “ the sense of them, whatever it is, which was in-
 “ tended by God, is true; for he that doth not so,
 “ calls God’s truth into question. But to believe
 “ this or that to be the true sense of them, or to
 “ believe the true sense of them, and to avoid the
 “ false, is not necessary either to faith, or salvation.”

It may be asked, however, whether this gives
 us satisfaction to the full? Do not our *Creeds* and
Articles contain particulars which we shall look for
 in vain in M. C.’s list of the objects of faith?
 Are not many whom we consider as heretics ready
 to subscribe to this list? Was Mr. C. inadvertently,
 or designedly silent with regard to these particulars?
 Or are we to consign them to the class of obscurity?
 Whatever might have been his motive to the word-
 ing of his paragraph in this manner, or whatever
 was his personal persuasion in respect to the fun-
 damental articles of the faith professed by the
 Church

Church of *England*, the momentous import of the interrogatories I have just put must be visible to every reader.

When Mr. C., or any body else tells us, that
 “ God does not require any more of any man than
 “ this, to believe the Scripture to be God’s word,
 “ and to endeavour to find the true sense of it, and
 “ to live according to it ;” or, that “ he that
 “ believes the Scripture sincerely, and endeavours
 “ to believe it in the true sense, cannot possibly be
 “ an heretic,”* he must be understood with qualification ; as asserting, not absolutely that an honest man cannot possibly *err concerning the faith*, but that error, or heresy will not be imputed to involuntary ignorance, or to sincerity of persuasion.

“ Heresy, says Bp. *Taylor*, is not an error of the
 “ understanding, but of the will ;” and elsewhere,
 “ it is not the opinion, but the impiety that con-
 “ demns and makes the heretic.” On this principle this sagacious and moderate writer condemns the *Herefiarch* whose error “ commences upon
 “ pride and ambition, &c. and excuses those who
 “ follow him in simplicity of heart.”

Agreeably to all this, Dr. *Potter*, (author of the Answer to *Charity Mistaken*, whose cause *Chillingworth* espouses,) and after him Dr. *Waterland* quotes the following remarkable passage from *Salvian*, an ancient Bishop of *Marseilles*, respecting the truly

* See Relig. of Protest. p. 335 ; and end of Preface.

sincere

sincere of the *Arian* persuasion. *They are heretics, but do not know that they are so. In short, they are heretics in our judgment, not so in their own; for they esteem themselves such good Catholics, that they even throw upon us the infamous charge of heresy. Such therefore as they are to us, we are to them. We know assuredly that they are injurious to the divine generation of the Son of God, in making him inferior to the Father. They, on the other hand, think us injurious to the Father, in believing them both equal. How they shall be punished at the day of judgment for this their error, &c. no one can know except the Judge.*

It may be proper to take Mr. K.'s argument, and Mr. C.'s answer into re-consideration. "Heresies," says the former, would arise after the Apostles' time, and after the writing of Scriptures: these "cannot be discovered, condemned, and avoided, unless the Church be infallible; therefore there must be a Church infallible." The substance of Mr. C.'s reply is, that "without any need of an infallible guide," the great truths of the Gospel are discoverable, and consequently heresies avoidable, by all such as "believe Scripture to be the rule of faith:" and that with respect to those "obscure places of Scripture," which Mr. K. tells us "contain matters of faith," we have nothing to do but "believe that the sense of them, whatsoever it is, which was intended by God, is true," without being solicitous to avoid mistakes concerning them.

By

By this answer 'tis certain this celebrated disputant seems to lay his own faith rather open to suspicion. For does he not admit what he might, and in fact ought to have contested? Take them in the gross, the "places of Scripture which contain "matters of faith," are not by any means *obscure*, but altogether plain and intelligible. *I speak concerning the faith of the Church.* What the sense of these places is, according to the established laws of interpretation, and according to the belief of the Christians of the first ages, is a question, to the determination of which we surely need not have recourse to infallibility. Though therefore, with respect to passages really ambiguous, or *obscure*, it will be a safe and excellent rule, "to believe that "the sense of them, whatsoever it is, which was "intended by God, is true," yet it will be unfair, unreasonable, and unsafe to apply this rule to places which are no otherwise ambiguous, or *obscure*, than as they "contain matters of faith;" especially when we remember how frequently, and how earnestly we are required to *strive for the faith*, to *contend for the faith*, and to *examine and prove our own selves whether we be in the faith*. Truth is not less truth because it is held in a Church that pretends not to be infallible. *God only knows the hearts of the children of men:* but at the same time it will be no breach of charity to intimate, that *every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind,*
that

that if he errs, his error is an error, not of his *will*, but of his *understanding*.

CHILLINGWORTH, *part 1. c. 2. p. 90.* TAYLOR'S *Disc. on the Lib. of Prophecy*, *Seet. 2. p. 23, 42.* POTTER'S *Anf. to Char. Mistaken. Seet. 4. p. 119.* WATERLAND'S *Import. of the Doc. of the Trinity. p. 167.* SALV. *de Guber. l. 5.*

Page 14. (*d*) of *insanity*.] I cannot bring myself to recall these words by the high respect which on many accounts is due to the names of certain persons, eminent for their ability, and some of them for their piety too, who have advanced notions not a whit less eccentric or extravagant than these. The late worthy Bishop of *Cloyne*, who denied, or at least doubted the existence of matter, is not without his numerous admirers. In fact, he seems to have confounded all, though he has convinced none. But whatever purpose was intended to be served by such a doctrine, surely its real consequences must be detrimental to the cause of Christianity. If all about us is mere mockery and illusion, the very foundations of all evidence, all faith, and all practice are undermined; nor will it be possible to determine which position most contradicts my senses, or offers most violence to my conceptions, *that* which avers the non-existence of matter, or *that* which maintains the *transubstantiation* of it in the holy Sacrament. The followers of Mr. *Hobbes* will be apt to laugh this notion to scorn,
under

under a persuasion that they deny, or doubt the existence of Spirit, and consequently of God, with a much better grace. It may be observed, with regard to both extremes, that there is no such thing as demonstrating beyond a possibility of doubt, or contradiction. For, to use the words of an author of the last century, “ it is possible that *mathematical* “ *evidence* itself may be but a constant undiscoverable delusion, which our nature is necessarily and “ perpetually obnoxious unto, and that either “ fatally or fortuitously there has been in the “ world time out of mind such a being as we call “ *Man*, whose essential property it is to be then “ most of all mistaken when he conceives a thing “ most evidently true.” There is no shutting the door against scepticism. We meet with doubters and disputers of all ages and nations. *Marcus Antoninus* makes mention of one *Monimus*, a *Cynic* philosopher, who averred that all is fancy, and that there is absolutely no such thing as a *criterion* of truth. *Pyrrho*, though not the first sceptic, was famous enough to give an appellation to scepticism. But notwithstanding all this, a man of sense and of common prudence will listen to rational evidence, and yield assent to moral certainty. He will soon be convinced upon enquiry, that both body and spirit exist, and that mind is neither matter nor motion ; that if chance, or nature, if you please, made the world, it is that which preserves it too ;
and

and may dissolve it; and, after its dissolution, may restore it to its original state, or reduce it to one infinitely worse than the present. This sure is at best but uncomfortable philosophy. Not that I would hereby insinuate immorality to be necessarily connected with infidelity. *Plato* distinguished long ago between the “ranting” and sober atheist; and observed, that a man whose sentiments are impious may be virtuous from constitution. Accordingly he very justly resolves atheism into not barely depravity of manners, but sometimes into an affectation of singular wisdom.* One source of atheism in his opinion is, *Αμαθια μαλα χαλιπν δοκιστα εναι μεγαλη φρονησις*, which is almost literally translated in the following words of the Apostle, *professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*

Dr. *Cudworth* seems unwarily to give some advantage to the atheist, where he says, that “when we affirm that God is incomprehensible, we only mean, that our imperfect minds cannot have such a conception of his nature as doth perfectly master, conquer, and subdue that vast object under it, &c.” The case is, we comprehend by our reason *that* God is, though not *what* he is, in respect of his essence in the abstract. But that he is self-existent from all eternity, that he is a *Spirit*, that he is the Creator and Governor of the Universe, that he is all-perfect, are certain truths,

* See Letters on Infidelity. p. 35.

notwithstanding

notwithstanding the darkness which surrounds them. *Sophocles* may be imagined to have had these truths in his eye, when speaking of the divine edicts, and the immutable decrees of heaven, he puts this fine sentiment in the mouth of *Antigone*,

Οὐ γὰρ τι νῦν γε κ' ἄχθεις, ἀλλ' αἰ ποτὲ

Ζῇ ταύτῃ, κούδεις οἶδεν ἐξ ὅτου Φαίη.

And yet we have wits and philosophers of great name and recent date, who seem desirous of reviving the old atomical physiology, which, as Dr. *Cudworth* expresses it, “makes all things to be “materially and mechanically necessary without a “God.” These gentlemen are at least far from pronouncing matter incapable of the privilege of thought. One * in direct terms calls thought the *agitation of the brain*. Unhappily Mr. *Locke* so far subscribes to this principle, as to declare his opinion, that “we have not sufficient knowledge to “determine, by the light of reason, that God “could not grant the gift of thought and sensation “to a being which we call material.” Mr. *Voltaire* eagerly caught at this notion of the “sole reason-“able metaphysician,” as he calls him.

MORE's *Antid. against Atheism*. p. 10. CUDWORTH's *Intell. Syst.* ch. 3. p. 176. PLATO *de Leg.* l. 10. CLARKE's *Dem. of the Being, &c. of God*, p. 22, 23, &c. SOPHOC. *Antig. Act.* 3. v. 462. *Memoirs of VOLTAIRE*, p. 61. See JOHNSON's note at cap. 4. of PUFFENDORF's *de officio hom. et civ.* See M. ANTONI. lib. 2—15.

* Hume's *Dia'logues*, p. 60.

Page 19. (*e*) *hundred mysteries as one.*] I shall beg leave to confront the pride of infidels with the joint authorities of Mr. *Boyle*, and Lord *Bacon*; the former of whom in his treatise, entitled *Motives to the Love of God*, thus expresses himself. “ If I be not very much mistaken, they are so, “ who presume to give us satisfactory definitions of “ God’s nature, which we may perhaps more safely “ define by the impossibility of its being accurately “ defined. Nor will an assiduity and constancy of “ our speculations herein relieve us: for too fixed “ a contemplation of God’s essence does but the “ more confound us.” And then he refers us to the well-known story of *Simonides*. Agreeably to these sentiments, the great Lord *Bacon* says, “ If any “ man shall think by view and enquiry into these “ sensible and material things, to attain that light “ whereby he may reveal unto himself the nature “ and will of God, then is he spoiled through vain “ philosophy. And hence, continues he, it hath “ proceeded, that some of the chosen rank of the “ more learned have fallen into heresy, whilst “ they have sought to fly up to the secrets of the “ Deity, by the waxen wings of the senses.” And “ again. “ The prerogative of God comprehends “ the whole man, and is extended as well to “ the reason, as to the will of man; *i. e.* that “ man renounce himself wholly, and draw near “ unto God; wherefore as we are to obey his law,
“ though

“ though we find a reluctance in our will, so
 “ we are to believe his word, though we find a re-
 “ luctation in our reason ; for if we believe only
 “ that which is agreeable to our reason, we give
 “ assent to the matter, not to the author, &c. By
 “ how much therefore any divine mystery is more
 “ discordant and incredible, by so much the more
 “ honour is given to God in believing, &c. &c.”
 How do these sentiments differ from those of the
 “ philosophic Christians” of this enlightened age !

*Motives, &c. p. 63, 64. Bacon on the Advance-
 ment of Learning, translated by Watts, B. I. p. 8.
 9. p. 468.*

Page 21. (f) *ventilation of these subjects.*] It is
 ridiculous, it is useless, it is endless to start meta-
 physical questions, which instead of clearing mat-
 ters, serve only to confound them. It has been
 asked, whether the Deity be naturally or morally
 good ; or whether he is “ necessarily good and
 “ just in the same sense as he is eternal and omni-
 “ cient ?” All speculations on such points as these
 are covered by the general idea of absolute inhe-
 rent perfection. Perhaps *Seneca* may be allowed to
 discharge this difficulty not unhappily, when, speak-
 ing of the Deity, he says, *Ipse est necessitas sua.*
 The ingenious editor of *Puffendorf’s* treatise *De*
officio hominis et civis speaks much the same lan-
 guage in the following note : *Deus intelligitur ad*
suarum perfectionum normam actiones componere. Ipse
U sibi

sibi lex est. Ens natura perfectissimum cum Deus sit, ideo quodcunque agit vel eligit, non potest non esse optimum. Itaque nugæ agunt, vel quiddam pejus, qui Deum, ens primum et summum, virtutis et obligationis capacem esse docent. * But these last words seem rather obscure.

To avoid making God the author of evil, the doctrine of *Zoroastres* was, that "God originally
"and directly created only light, or good; and that
"darkness, or evil, followed it by consequence,
"as the shadow doth the person; that light, or
"good, hath only a real production from God,
"and the other afterward resulted from it, as the
"defect thereof." An ingenious writer gives us the sentiments of *Plato* on this perplexing subject, in the following translation. "God is good.
"He is not, as many say, the cause of every thing.
"The good things we enjoy are to be solely ascribed
"to him; but we are to search for another cause
"than God for our evils. Or, if we will say
"they come from God, † some such reason as this is
"to be assigned. We may say, God does always
"what is just and good, and the persons punished
"receive benefit by it; but the poet must not say
"the sufferers are miserable, and God inflicts that

* See Johnson's Note at Sect. 4. Book 1.

† *Plato* quotes here the famous passage in *Homer*, where mention is made of *Jupiter's* two Vessels, the one containing good, and the other evil, &c. See *Plato* de Repub. b. 2. and *Pope's* Note at v. 527. of 24th. Book of the *Iliad*.

" misery

“ misery on them ; if indeed he say, the wicked;
 “ as miserable, stand in need of punishment, and
 “ when punished by God, receive benefit from it,
 “ this may be permitted ; but we are strenuously
 “ to oppose any man, who says God is the author
 “ of evil to a good man. Such language is at
 “ no rate to be tolerated in a state.” The judicious
 reader will see how little a way this theory goes to-
 wards clearing the difficulty ; but he will, I pre-
 sume, acknowledge it goes far enough to convince
 us, that *Plato* had, “ to speak modestly, as precise
 “ ideas of the Divine nature as any modern philo-
 “ sopher,” according to the translator’s expression.
 But in his *Timæus*, this famous philosopher imputes
 the origin of evil to the “ necessity of imperfect
 “ beings,” as Dr. *Cudworth* expresses it. “ Where-
 “ fore, says he, though, according to *Plato*, God be
 “ properly and directly the cause of nothing else but
 “ good, yet the necessity of these lower imperfect things
 “ does unavoidably give birth and being to evils.”
 This is conformable enough to modern notions.
Aristotle seems to have thought the Deity to have
 been the cause or principle of all things without
 exception ; tho’ in the following sentence he ex-
 presses himself in terms general, modest, and un-
 peremptory ;—*θεος δοκει τοι αυτοις πασιν ειναι και αρχη τις.*

It is further observable, that not only many hea-
 thens, and among others, *Platonists*, but, what is
 more extraordinary, Christians also have asserted

the self-existence and eternity of matter, in order to account for the origin of evil, and effectually salve the honour of the Deity. God would have made *nihil non optimum*, says *Hermogenes*, as *Tertulian* represents his and his followers reasonings. These heretics were called *Materiarii*. It has been the opinion of some that God permitted the fall of man, purely with a view to his redemption. *

“ The author of *Deism Revealed* remarks, “ that
 “ there are two opposite and supreme principles,
 “ according to the belief of almost all the Pagans
 “ now in the world.” We are further given to understand by other authors, that God’s *absolute decrees and predetermination of good and evil* is the doctrine of the *Koran* in general; though the *Mahometans* are divided in their opinions upon this article. The sect of the *Hasbemiens* were, it seems, so afraid of making God the author of evil, that they would not allow him to have created an infidel; which was adopting something like the old *Magian* theory, according to which there are two principles, or a good and evil God, who are in a state of perpetual enmity and opposition. On the other hand, the *Mozdarians* thought it possible for God to be a liar, unjust, &c. as the *Basharians* taught, that “ God is not obliged to do what is best; and
 “ that, had it pleased him, he might have made all

* See Catcott’s Sermon. 2. p. 33. 3. 48.

“ men

“men true believers.” The *English* translation of a *Latin* version of an *Arabic* manuscript, which contains a short system of *Mabometan* theology, gives us a distinction upon the subject of the divine decrees, as whimsical as it is unsatisfactory. In the sixth section we have the following passage.—“God hath so decreed good, obedience, and faith, that he ordains and wills them; and that they may be under his decree, his salutary direction, his good pleasure and command: on the contrary, God has decreed, does ordain, will and determine evil, disobedience, and infidelity; yet without his salutary direction, his good pleasure, or command; it being only by way of seduction, indignation, and prohibition. But whosoever shall say, that God is not delighted with good, and faith, or that God hath not an indignation against evil and infidelity; or that good and evil are from God, so that God hath decreed and willed both, with complacency in them, he is certainly an infidel.” Then follows in another character;—*Direct us, O great God, into the right way!*—A petition expressive of the author’s perplexity.

The general way both among Jews and Christians of accounting for the origin of evil, is to derive it from the abuse of human liberty. Let us turn to the sentiments of the learned *Grotius* upon this subject. “*Cum diximus Deum omnium esse*

*“ causam, addidimus, eorum quæ vere subsistunt; nihil
 “ enim prohibet, quo minus ipsa, quæ subsistunt, deinde
 “ causæ sint accidentium quorundam; quales sunt
 “ actiones. Deus hominem et mentes sublimiores homi-
 “ ne creavit cum agendi libertate: quæ agendi libertas
 “ vitiosa non est, sed potest sua vi aliquid vitiosum
 “ producere.”* Still will not this elastic difficulty
 return with full force upon us? For may it not be
 asked, who created men and angels, and endowed
 them with this liberty? Or could *either* have abused
 a privilege they never enjoyed? Is there nothing
 of apparent causality in all this? Indeed the learn-
 ed author seems to me to be sensible of his distressed
 situation. He observes very justly, in the words
 immediately following those just cited, that it would
 be impious to call God the author of evil. *“ Hujus
 “ quidem generis malis, quæ moraliter mala dicuntur,
 “ omnino Deum adscribere auctorem nefas est.”* But
 what does he say in the leading sentence of this
 very section? *“ Neque ab eo quod diximus, dimove-
 “ re nos debet, quod mala multa evenire cernimus,
 “ quorum videtur origo Deo adscribi non posse; ut qui
 “ perfectissime, sicut ante dictum est, bonus sit.”*
 Surely that same *videtur* betrays entanglement.
 Let us just see now in what manner Mr. *Le-clerc*,
 the ingenious editor of this work of *Grotius*, illus-
 trates this delicate passage. *“ Prævidit quidem
 “ etiam Deus fore ut naturæ liberæ libertate sua abute-
 “ rentur, indeque multa mala et physica et moralia
 “ eventura*

“eventura ; nibilo secius abusum illum, consecrariaque
 “ejus pati maluit, quam naturas libertate præditas
 “non creare. Quid ita ? Quia cum natura libera
 “sit præstantissima creatura, quæque summam opificis
 “potentiam quam maxime ostendit ; Deus noluit incom-
 “moda ex naturæ mutabilitate promanantia anteverte-
 “re, quia ea potest, cum visum erit, per totam æter-
 “nitatem emendare ; iis modis qui non nisi bonitati ejus
 “convenientissimi esse possunt, quamvis eos nondum re-
 “velarit.”

The very learned and equally pious Dr. Barrow expresses himself on this subject in the following words. “As for those real imperfections and evils,
 “(moral evils, habitual distempers, irregular ac-
 “tions, &c.) we need not seek any one eternal
 “cause for them ; (though order and uniformity
 “do, disorder and confusion do not argue any
 “unity of cause whence they should proceed :) the
 “true causes of them are notorious enough : the
 “voluntary declining of men, &c, from the way
 “God doth prescribe them ; their abusing their
 “own faculties, &c. &c. As for other evils of
 “griefs and pains incident to the nature, or conse-
 “quent upon the actions of any being, they are
 “such as God himself, (without any derogation
 “to his goodness,) may in his wisdom, or justice be
 “author of, for ends sometimes apparent to our
 “understanding, sometimes surpassing its reach. It
 “may suffice, that God challengeth to himself the
 “being

“ being the cause of them. *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the mouth of the Most High? I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil.*” (See Amos. 3. v. 6. Lam. 3. v. 38. Isa. 45. v. 7.) We derive rather distress than content from all this; nor (to go a step farther) shall we receive more satisfaction from St. Augustine, in the following quaint solution,—*mali nulla natura est, sed amissio boni mali nomen accepit*; or from Wollebius, (Divin. Profess. at Basil in the last century,) in the following distinction, *non enim eveniunt (viz. Dei decreta) necessitate coactionis, sed necessitate tantum immutabilitatis*; or from Mr. Whiston, in his observation, that “ whatever is evil must have been the consequence of man’s fall, and not God’s introduction.” We are reminded by these several particulars of the heresy of the Marcionites, who no less absurdly than wickedly maintained, that the God of Moses and the God of the Gospel were two different Beings; the former, rigid in his nature, and vindictive in his proceedings; the latter, benign in his disposition, and gracious in his dispensations.

Bp WILKINS on the *Prin. of Nat. Relig.* B. I. p. 116. See Mr. GEDDES’s note at p. 129 of *Essay on the Compos. of the Antients.* Bp. CUMBERLAND’S *Essay on the defects of Heathen Deism*, p. 10. PRI-

DEAUX’S

DEAUX's *Connex.* V. I. p. 179. GEDDES's *Essay on PLATO*, p. 132, &c. JENKINS's *Reason. of Christian.* V. I. p. 224. TERTUL. *adver.* HERMOG. p. 282. CUDWORTH's *Intell. Syst.* cb. 4. p. 197. *Ibid.* 220. ARIST. *Met. lib. I. System of Mahom. Theol.* p. 33. SALE's *Disc. prefixed to the Transla. of the Koran.* BARROW's *Expos. of Cr.* p. III, 112. AUGUS. *de civ. Dei.* II. 9. WOLL. *Comp. Theo. cap. 3.* p. 23. See STILLINGFLEET's *Orig. Sac. B. 3. cb. 3.* Bp. BRAMHALL's *Controversy with HOBBS, on this subject.* Mr. BRYANT's *Treatise, and Dr. PRIESTLY on philosophical necessity.* *Humorous Dial. between PHILAU. and TIMOTH. dedicated to Abp. SHELDON,* p. 87, &c. WHISTON's *Disc. on the Hist. of the Creat.* See Bp. LOWTH's *note at Isai. cb. 45. v. 7.* See GROTIUS, *lib. 1. p. 18. de veri.*

Page 30. (g) *eternal essence itself*] We cannot possibly be too cautious, too reserved, too general in our doctrines from the pulpit, or the press, respecting the Holy Trinity, or the particular Divinity of our Saviour. Infidelity is always on the watch, and will take advantage in a moment of the least ambiguous, or inaccurate, or obscure expression, which may fall from our lips, or our pens. Some of the Fathers themselves, and indeed of our own most able writers, sometimes speak unguardedly, and inconsistently on these subjects. For the sake of perspicuity and distinction, as it should seem, it has been said, the *Father* is *self-existent*, and the
Son,

Son, or Holy Ghost, necessarily existent; which is in fact a distinction without a difference. The *Three Persons*, as constituting *One God*, are equally *self-existent*. The *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* are the Deity; and every idea of originality, derivation, &c. evaporates in the consideration of a Trinity in Unity. "Though it has pleased God to represent the relation which the Second Person in the Trinity bears to the First, under the analogy of that of a Son to a Father, yet we must not think that this analogy holds in every respect, or that every circumstance of human paternity and filiation is applicable to the Divine." These are the words of a late worthy and learned writer, who expresses himself still more happily in the following passage. "It is impossible for God himself to reveal these things to such kind of beings as we are, any other way than by accommodating himself to our conceptions, and using such terms as bear some analogy to things known and understood by us." "The Father, (says another able advocate for the doctrine of the Trinity,) is first in our conception of God; and therefore when we speak of the Almighty, or the eternal God, and the reason is the same for the only God, we primarily and principally mean the Father, tacitly including the other two Persons. *

* It is well observed by Mr. Parkhurst, that the first, second, and third persons in the Trinity are merely *theological*, not *scriptural* terms. *Divin. &c. of Christ.* p. 35.

But

But is the language of the author last quoted of a piece with this sentence, when he talks of self-existence, or *unoriginateness*, as the peculiar mode of the existence of the *First* Person? Or is the writer first quoted perfectly consistent with himself, when he concurs in sentiment with those whom he calls “the most zealous defenders of the *Nicene* faith;” and agrees with *all* the antient writers, who, he tells us, “hold the Son to be in some sense inferior “to the Father, and that even with regard to his “divine nature?” “The Father, says he, is the “first Person, the Son, the second. The Father “they *all* represent as unbegotten, receiving his “being and attributes from none but himself; the “Son they teach to be God of God; begotten of “the Father, and receiving his nature, &c, from “the Father, but yet coeternal and coequal with “the Father, receiving from him from all eternity “the same intire and undivided essence.” Is not this language inaccurate, incongruous, and self-contradictory?” Many passages both in antient and modern writers are exceptionable on the same grounds. To select a few. The learned Bp. *Bull* gives, in his own words, the following sentiment of *Petavius*. *Nam, ut recte Petavius, non potest Filius a Patre gigni, nisi ab eo naturam ac deitatem accipit, &c.* St. *Hillary*, as quoted by the same author, says in *libro de Synodis*, *Patri subiectus est Filius, ut auctori*. *Russinus* in his treatise on the
Creed,

Creed, calls the Father the head of the Son. *Cum ipse Filius sit omnium caput, ipsius tamen caput est Pater.* And *Damascenus* in his tract *de fide orthodoxa* has the following words ; *παντα εν οσα εχει ο υιος και το πνευμα εκ τε πατρος εχει, και αυτο το ειναι.* And *St. Austin*, *argute pro more suo*, according to *Bp. Bull's* remark, observes, in a discourse on a passage in *St. Matthew's* gospel, (if I mistake not,) as follows : *Insinuatur nobis in Patre auctoritas, in Filio natiuitas, in Spiritu Sancto communitas, in tribus æqualitas.* It is *Bp. Bull's* own remark, *unicum esse in Trinitate principium, principii expers, nempe Patrem, dogma fuisse in primæva ecclesia tam fixum,—ut in quadregesimo nono Canonum, qui dicuntur Apostolorum, damnetur quisquis baptizauerit in tres principii expertes ; ut τρεις αναρχους.* Under the same article the learned Prelate observes, that the antient Fathers, and those of the *Nicene Council*, and *Athanasius* himself never scrupled to give the appellation or title of the one only God to the Father. Let the reader take his own words. *Denique veteres Deum Patrem, eo quod principium, causa, auctor, et fons Filii sit, unum illum et solum Deum appellare non sunt veriti. Sic enim ipsi Patres Nicæni exordiuntur suum symbolum ; q. v. Et magnus Athanasius, quo nemo melius intellexit Synodi Nicænæ mentem, &c, concedit Patrem jure dici μονον Θεον, οτι μονος αγενντος, και μονος πηγη θεοτης, quod solus ingentus sit, &c. Propter Patrem vivit Filius, says St. Ambrose, as quoted by Bishop Pearson, quod ex Patre Filius est ; propter Patrem, quod ERUCTATUM est*

est verbum ex Patris corde, quod a Patre processit, quod ex paterno generatus est UTERO, &c. Dr. Fiddes gives us a passage from St. Hilary, in which that Father asserts, that “our making the Son God is “no objection against the Father’s being the one “God. He is the one God, says he, because the “only underived God.” Surely Bp. Pearson himself, who in the main is wonderfully exact, does not speak in the most proper terms, when he tells us, that “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is “originally God, as not receiving his eternal “being from any other ; that therefore it necessarily followeth, that Jesus Christ, who is certainly not the Father, cannot be a Person subsisting “in the Divine Nature originally of himself ; and “consequently, it having been already proved, “that he is truly and properly the eternal God, “that he must be understood to have the Godhead “communicated to him by the Father, who is not “only eternally but originally God ; that in him “(Christ) is the same fulness of the Godhead, “more than which the Father cannot have, but “yet that in that perfect and absolute equality “there is notwithstanding this disparity, &c. &c.” To adduce only one example more ; even the judicious Hooker is off his guard in the following passage. “Seeing therefore the Father alone is originally that Deity which Christ originally is not, “(for Christ is God by being of God, light “by

“ by issuing out of light,) it followeth hereupon,
 “ that whatsoever Christ hath common unto him
 “ with his heavenly Father, the same of necessity
 “ must be given him, but naturally and eternally
 “ given him, not bestowed by way of benevolence
 “ &c.

The priority implied in the term Father, in its common acceptation, accounts for all this incoherency ; but where, I would gladly know, do the terms *auctor*, *fons*, *origo*, *principium*, &c. occur in the Scriptures, or in the writings of the apostolical Fathers, *Clemens*, *Polycarp*, and *Ignatius* ? Or where are any terms to be found importing subordination and inferiority, except such as evidently refer to the humanity of *Jesus Christ* ? And after all, and all this put together notwithstanding, the common resemblances by which the great mystery has been faintly illustrated by the Fathers, especially by *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and *Origen*, as light from the sun, or a stream from a fountain, are produced to no purpose as proofs of a subordination, &c. For let light be supposed to have issued from the sun, or a stream from a fountain, from all eternity ; on this supposition it is plain, causality and originality are merely nominal ; the fountain necessarily implies the stream, and the sun, light : and in like manner, in the case before us, the existence of the Father necessarily supposes the existence of the Son, and

and of the Holy Ghost. The Father can no more exist without the Son than the Son without the Father.

The truth is, the Fathers of the Church, whose sentiments Bp. *Bull* lays before us, apparently grant much, but really yield nothing. If *Athanasius*, e. g., asserting the eternity and Divinity of the Son of God, meant not such an absolute co-equality as entirely excludes all dependence and inferiority, he flatly contradicts the Creed which goes under his name, in which it is expressly said, that in the Trinity, "none is afore or after other, none is "greater or less than another;" and if he did mean this, we cannot argue against his faith from the carelessness, or the impropriety, or even the absurdity of his expressions. Elucidation has before now been the parent of entanglement. The *Arians* themselves are sensible they cannot admit the eternity of the Son of God, without acknowledging at the same time his absolute co-equality; and therefore affect to understand every passage or phrase seemingly derogating from the dignity of *Jesus Christ*, as a direct assertion, or tacit concession that he is a creature. Through a most strange inadvertence, the writers we have been extracting from appear to have confounded the idea of temporal with that of eternal generation.

It has been frequently and well observed, that most of the Fathers, before the Council of *Nice*,
speak

ſpeak ſometimes of a temporal generation of the Son by the operation of the Holy Ghoſt on the bleſſed Virgin ; and ſometimes, by a ſort of *catachreſis*, give the name of generation to the miſſion of the Son from the Father, for the purpoſe of creating the world ; and that, by directing our whole attention to the paſſages relative to both theſe, the enemies of our faith have artfully attempted to prevent our notice, or acknowledgment of other numberleſs places in the writings of theſe Fathers, wherein they plainly and unequivocally aſſert the eternal generation of the Son of God.

By help of theſe conſiderations, and ſuch as theſe, we ſhall, for the moſt part, be enabled to reconcile exceptionable paſſages in the writings of the Fathers in general with the pureſt faith, and ſtricteſt orthodoxy ; and ſhall have no cauſe for reſentment, or complaint, if in ſo large a bulk of human compoſition, and amidſt ſuch a multiplicity of ſubjects and circumſtances, we are ſometimes ſurprized by inaccurate diſtinction, or unſound ſentiment.

The ſuppoſed canon referred to by Bp. Bull, which forbade the baptizing *us τρις αραρχης*, on pain of damnation, really maintains only the doctrine of the *Athana. Cr. viz.* that “ there is one Father, “ not three Fathers.” *Tertullian* ſays ſomewhere, that there was a time *quando Filius Dei non erat* ; which is true in the ſecond or third ſenſe of Sonſhip ; as there was a time when God was not a
Creator ;

Creator; viz. *ante mundum conditum*. Nay, there is an expression in *Lactantius* which more than insinuates that there was a time, when even God the Father, or God absolutely considered, was not; for, says he, *Deus ipse se fecit*. And, by the way, they who talk of God the Father's "RECEIVING his *Being from himself alone*," do but paraphrase the words of *Lactantius*. I cannot think the Catholic faith can be in the least affected by these *early opinions* concerning *Jesus Christ*.

Metaphysical subtleties, technical terms, and unscriptural definitions and distinctions have undoubtedly done no small disservice to the cause of Christianity. But, as Dr. *Waterland* repeatedly observes, let the blame be laid at the right door. These things were artfully and gradually introduced into the Church by heretics, for the purpose of confounding and perplexing matters. The ancient Christians rested solely on the authority of Scripture, and the concurrent voice of tradition.* The Church believed in the Trinity, believed in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and worshipped all Three as One God, before the distinction was expressed by the term *Persons*, or the word *substance* was made use of. "It does not appear," says Dr. *W*. "that the word *Trinity* was yet applied to this case;" viz. in *Justin Martyr's* time, in the middle of the second century. The orthodox were necessitated to contend against their

* See Barrow on the Pope's Supremacy: p. 626.

adversaries with their own weapons. And, what is worse, terms of art have been the fuel of strife amongst the orthodox themselves. It was a mere dispute of words which had like to have occasioned an irreparable breach between the Eastern and Western Churches. Take the following account of it in the words of Dr. *Potter*. “The Orientals,” says he, “professing to believe three *Hypostases* in “the glorious Trinity would not admit three Persons, and were therefore thought to be *Arians*. “On the contrary, the Western believing three *Persons*, could not be induced to confess three *Hypostases*, and thereupon were taken to be *Sabellians*. “Here was a great jealousy grounded upon a great error; which *Atbanasius* easily discovered, and “restored again their good amity and intelligence; “shewing that they differed not in judgment, all “meaning the same thing; and that *Hypostasis* on “one side was the very same in effect with *Person* “on the other.”*

A writer of the last century, whose name does not appear, speaking of the controversies with which the Church of *England* was agitated in the year 1641, expresses himself in the following manner. “They be not of the highest nature; “for they are not touching the high mysteries of “faith; such as detained the Churches after their “first peace for many years, what time the heretics moved curious questions, and made strange

* Answer to Char. Mist. Sect. 3. p. 90.

“anatomies

“anatomies of the nature and Person of Christ;
 “and the catholic fathers were compelled to fol-
 “low them with all subtlety of disputations and
 “determinations, to exclude them from their eva-
 “sions, and to take them in their own labyrinths:
 “so as it is rightly said, *illis temporibus ingeniosa res*
 “*fuit esse Christianum.*”

Farther; it is certain the great doctrine of the Trinity hath been sometimes dishonoured, if not weakened, by puerile illustrations, and playfulness of distinction. According to *T. Aquinas*, *Trinitas est quasi trium unitas*. It is somewhere observed likewise by this famous Doctor, that the Father is the *beginning*, but not the *cause* of the Son. And says a learned systematical writer, I think, with a levity one should not expect in him, *aliud est Trinus, aliud est Triplex. Trinum est quod essentia unum, tres habet subsistendi modos: triplex, quod ex tribus rebus est compositum. Deum trinum dicimus, non triplicem; et Trinitatem non Triplicitatem*. To which is very sensibly subjoined the following caution; *cum judicio legendi sunt Patres, qui non raro sententiis diffident in usu vocum, Substantiæ, Hypostases, &c.* The same author cites, and at the same time justly censures a chimerical distinction of the Schoolmen betwixt *generation* and *procession*. *Differunt Generatio et Processio; sed quodnam est discrimen, tutius ignoratur quam quæritur. Scholastici dicunt Generationem Filii fieri per modum INTELLECTUS, unde*

dicitur Dei sapientia; Processionem per modum VOLTUNTATIS, unde Spiritus dicitur amor et charitas. You have Mr. Boyle's sentiments on this subject in his *Confidera. on the style of Scripture*, p. 41.

Bp. BULL *de subord. Fil. Sect. 4.* p. 225. *Defen. Fid. Nicæ. cap. 10. Sect. 3.* p. 206, &c. PEARSON *on the Creed*, p. 34, 134. Fiddes, *vol. 1.* 384. HOOKER's *Eccles. Pol.* p. 296, &c. STEPHENS's *Serm. on the eternal Gen.* p. 51. WATERLAND's *Defence of his Quest.* p. 134. FOGG's *Theol. Spec.* p. 89, 109. WATERLAND's *Sermons.* p. 141. RANDOLPH's *Vindica. of the Doctrine of the Trinity. Part 2.* p. 10.

Page 32. (b) *the everlasting Father.*] Whatever we are precisely to understand by this expression, it is certain the proper title of Jesus Christ, considered as the second Person in the Trinity, is that of Son of God; Son in a transcendent and incomprehensible sense. We are informed by St. *John*, that the Jews sought the more to kill our Saviour, not only because he had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, thereby making himself equal with God. It is worth observing, that this translation by no means does justice to the original; or any thing like so forcibly imports the equality in question: *πατερ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν τὸν θεόν*; he called God his own Father, as Dr. Whitby and Dr. Hammond render it, *his PROPER Father, his Father αἰσχωτός*, (as Nonnus explains the words in the beginning, John i. 1.) *his Father* in a peculiar sense, in
a sense

a sense necessarily implying the same nature in both. The omission here is the more remarkable, as our translators attended to the same emphatical word in the only place besides where it occurs, and where its significance is not so obvious : *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?* (Rom. viii. 32.) The Socinian evasion of the passage in St. *John* is inexpressibly ridiculous, and reduces it almost to nonsense. *He made himself equal with God*, by asserting, that he did the works of his Father !

See WEBSTER on *John*. I. 2. See WHITBY and HAMMOND on *John* v. 18. See Dr. W. LOWTH'S *Commen. on Isai*. 9. 6.

Page 46. (i) of *Divine Providence*.] The notion that by the *seven Spirits* here mentioned are to be understood *seven angels*, who are the principal ministering Spirits of the Deity, is countenanced by a no less respectable authority than that of Dr. Hammond and Mr. Mede. But this is rejected by Grotius, and by the anonymous writer whom I follow, though under a different idea, and purely from a general survey of the matter. The writer I mean lays much stress on the number *seven*, which in *Hebrew* denotes perfection ; * but his reasonings from this circumstance appear to me too weak a foundation for the support of a theory.

* See Catcptr's Sermon. I. p. 14.

Dr. *Gill* without the least hesitation understands by the *seven spirits* the third Person in the blessed Trinity. He has adopted the above idea, and enlarged upon it. "By these *seven Spirits*," says this very sensible writer, "are intended the Holy Spirit of God, who is one in his Person, but his gifts and graces are various; and therefore he is signified by this number because of the fulness and perfection of them; and with respect to the *seven Churches*, over whom he presided, whom he influenced and sanctified, &c."

The *Ethiopic* version, this author observes, reads *from the seven Spirits which are before the throne of Jesus Christ*.

It is farther a remark of the same author, that the second Person is last mentioned in the benediction before us, "because many things were to be said of him; he is described in all his offices, &c."

Bp. *Newton* says, in effect, the very same thing. According to him, Jesus Christ is mentioned last "because the subsequent discourse more immediately relates to him."

MEDE *Disc.* 10. B. I. p. 42. See HAMMOND and GILL in loc. NEWTON on Prophecy. Vol. 3. p. 12.

Page 60. (k) when St. John wrote.] Some have supposed, as an ingenious writer observes, that detached pieces of the history of Christ, written by Apostles, or under their inspection, were extant in the Church before any Gospel was published.

Opinions

Opinions are far from being concurrent with respect to the publication of the Gospels in general ; but this is a diversity which does not in the least affect our argument. †

Cosmas of Alexandria, it seems, dates *St. Matthew's* Gospel from the martyrdom of *St. Stephen* ; and is generally thought to be as wide of the mark as *Isidore of Seville* ; according to whom, it was not written before the reign of *Caligula*. Perhaps the common opinion is the truest, that it was wrote about eight years after our Lord's Ascension.

It appears from the testimony of several old ecclesiastical writers, that *St. John* wrote his Gospel by the desire of the Bishops of *Asia*. *Is cum esset in Asia*, says *St. Jerome*, *et jam tunc hæreticorum semina pullularent, Cerintbi, Ebionis, et cæterorum, qui negant Christum in carne venisse, coactus est ab omnibus pene tum Asiæ episcopis, et multarum ecclesiarum legationibus, de DIVINITATE Salvatoris ALTIUS scribere.*

How far the notion of *Theophylact*, and, I believe, of some others, that *St. John* was particularly qualified to conceive, and to teach evangelical mysteries, by his personal purity, &c ; how far such a notion was well-grounded, or ought to be regarded as a mere fantasy, I undertake not to determine.

In *Hermannus Frank's* treatise entitled, *Christ the Sum, &c, of all the Scriptures*, &c. there is an anecdote concerning a *Franciscus Junius*, who was con-

† See *Bp. Percy's Key to the New-Test.* p. 47, &c.

verted from Atheism by accidentally dipping into the *New Testament*, and reading the first chapter of *St. John's Gospel*. This, says the author, is recorded by *Theophilus Spizelius* in his *scrutiny of Atheism*. He tells the story himself in his *Life* prefixed to his works, printed at *Geneva* 1705.

Mr. *Boyle* in his *Considerations*, &c. makes mention of the above circumstance, as related somewhere by *Junius* himself; and at the same time refers us to the history of a certain *Rabbi* who was converted to Christianity by reading the 53d. Ch. of *Yaiab*; and to the conversion of *St. Austin*, who was "changed from a debauchee into a Saint," by a passage in the 13th. Ch. of *St. Paul's Epist.* to the *Romans*.

TOWNSON *on the Gospels.* p. 25, 63. See LARDNER; and testimonies prefixed to *St. MATTHEW's Gospel* in MILLS's *Gr. Test. Prolegomena ad Commen. in Mat.* RANDOLPH's *Vindica.* pt. 2. p. 20, 21, 25. BOYLE's *Confid.* p. incert. SEE WATERLAND's *Import. of the doctrine of the Trin.*

Page 67. (1) *the Son of God.*] It is excellently observed by the incomparable *Dr. Barrow*, that "the first *Adam* derived his being immediately "from God's power and divine inspiration; that " *Isaac*, *Samuel*, and *John the Baptist* had a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being "of aged fathers, or barren mothers, by the interposition of Divine Power; and that we cannot

“ not easily conceive how the production of angels
 “ should be so much inferior to our Saviour’s
 “ temporal generation, supposing he had no
 “ other.”

It will corroborate what has already been advanced, to remark farther, that if Jesus Christ be any thing less than very God by eternal generation, he was abundantly over paid for all he did and suffered for our sakes; he was recompensed beyond all measure by his exaltation to the *right hand of the majesty on high*, and by the divine honour and worship which has been universally ascribed and paid to him. Under this view of the matter, the assumption of humanity deserves not the name of a condescension. In his human capacity indeed, Jesus Christ *for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, and despised the shame*; but in his divine, he could have no respect to the recompense of a reward. This is a thought which has been started and pursued by several writers. *Equidem rem attentius perpendenti*, says Bp. Bull, *liquebit, ex hypothese five Sociniana five Ariana, Deum in hoc negotio amorem, &c, suum potius in illum ipsum Filium quam erga nos homines ostendisse.*

BULL’s *Judic. Eccles. Cath. cap. 5. p. 313.*
 WATERLAND’s *Import. of the Doct. of the Trin. p. 47, 48, 49.* BARROW *on the Cr. p. 136.*

Page 72. (m) *Baptized for the remission of Sins.*] Persons baptized were in the primitive Church dipped

dipped three times; and this immersion at the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost respectively, let us, I think, sufficiently into the sense of the Christian Church, with regard to the equality of the Persons in the blessed Trinity. It affords at least a most strong presumption; which is greatly confirmed by the strictness of the *Apostolical Canons*, which, as Dr. *Cave* acquaints us, order *him*, Bishop, or Priest, that neglects the trine immersion, to be deposed. Afterwards, says the same learned Author, to obviate the pretences of the *Arians*, who used the trine immersion to denote the *Persons in the Trinity to be three distinct substances*, the fourth Council of *Toledo* in their fifth Canon decreed, that a single immersion would be sufficient; that the dipping under water would express Christ's death and burial, or descent into hell, and the coming out, his resurrection; the single immersion expressing the *Unity*, while the *Trinity* of Persons would be sufficiently noted by the *Form of words* in Baptism. To this effect Dr. *Cave*.

It is but reasonable to make allowances for the zeal, or, if you will, the simplicity of the devout Christians of the first ages. In process of time, and as the Christian world grew darker and more corrupt, many ceremonies and customs became *acts* of piety, which were originally but its *appendages*. I shall only mention one, for example's
sake;

lake, I mean that of praying with *uplifted* and *expanded* hands, in representation of the figure of the *Cross*: a practice which has given sanction to much folly and superstition.

CAVE'S *Prim. Christian.* p. 205, 183. See HOOKER'S *Eccles. Pol. B. 4.* p. 154.

Page 120. (n) *Jesus Christ our Lord.*] The numerous passages we meet with, both in the writings of the Apostles, and of these Apostolical fathers, * which strongly mark the human nature of *Jesus Christ*, might, one should think, direct us to the sense we are to put upon such as are relative to his divine. The perfect Godhead and perfect manhood of our Saviour seem to me to be forcibly contrasted in this discrimination. It had been better perhaps if Divines had rested wholly in this one general distinction. We can hardly be copious without being obscure at best on the subject of the *hypostatic union*. But we must not yet dismiss the passage before us.

In the first dialogue of *Theodoret*, which *Vossius* refers to in his note at this place, there is a remarkable variation of reading. Instead of *made* and *not made*, or *born* and *unborn*, γένντος καὶ ἀγένντος; † it there runs γένντος ἐξ ἀγένντου. It seems, *Athanasius*, and *Gelasius*, in his treatise *de duabus naturis*,

* For proof of the genuineness of St. IGNATIUS's seven short Epist. &c. See p. 131, &c. of Parkhurst's *Divin. of J. Christ.* and Arch. Bp. Wake on the Epist. of Ignatius.

† See Note at p. 136. of Parkhurst's *Divin. of Jesus Christ.*
defend

defend the first reading. But both come to the same point. *Jesus Christ was made and not made, born and unborn*, except in a mysterious and transcendent sense; he was the eternal Son of God. Or, he was *made, or born of a woman*, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, who *came upon her*, who was *unmade and unborn*; he was “both of *Mary and of God*,” the latter clause being a kind of paraphrase on the former; and so in effect *Ignatius* asserts here both the personality and the eternal existence of the *Spirit*.

There is another paragraph in this Epistle to the *Ephesians*, wherein omniscience, an essential property of the Godhead, appears to be attributed in the fullest terms to Jesus Christ,—*ὃν λαμβάνει τὸν κύριον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ κρυπτά ἡμῶν ἔγνω αὐτῶν ἐστὶ. Πάντα ἐν ποιεῖμεν ὡς αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμῖν κατοικῶντος, ἵνα ὡμεν αὐτῷ γὰρ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμῖν θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὡς περ καὶ ἐστίν, καὶ φανησέται πρὸς πρῶτον ἡμῶν, ἐξ ὧν δικαίως ἀγαπῶμεν αὐτόν. Jesus Christ* is signified by the word *κύριος*, wherever it occurs in the Epistles of this Father, I believe, without exception; and the context evidently patronises this application. Arch. Bp. *Wake* seems to have overlooked the plain scope of this passage. His translation runs, “there is nothing hid from God, &c.”

I had the satisfaction to find my sentiments exactly coinciding with those of Bp. *Bull* upon this very paragraph. His words are these, *De Christo loqui Ignatium, indubium est, non modo ex voce Κυρις, qua*

qua Christum ubique designat, sed etiam ex toto Sermonis contextu, de Jesu Servatore duntaxat agente.

And it is yet farther observable, that the introductory part of this Epistle (as *Vossius* has remarked) is rather obscure; and that (however it happened) the Most Rev. Translator has not done full justice to the plainest expression in it. The *blood of Christ* in the translation is in the original simply the *blood of God*; *ἡ αἷματι τοῦ θεοῦ*.

BULL's *Defen. Fid. Nicæ. cap. 2. Sect. 2.* IGNA. *Epist. to the Ephes. Sect. 1. & 15.* BARROW *on the Cr. p. 156.* See *John. 1. v. 14.*

Page 123. (o) *in it proper place.*] In matters not of faith, but merely of opinion, these venerable fathers in general are not altogether without peculiarities which are tinged a little with the pious fancifulness of superstition. This is more especially apparent in their notion of spiritual references, and emblematical representations.

The *scarlet-line* which the *spies* directed *Rabab* to fix to her window, &c. is specified by St. *Clement* himself, * and by some others, as typical of the redemption of mankind by the *blood* of Jesus Christ. But of all of them, except St. *Barnabas*, *Origen* is perhaps the largest dealer in symbol and allegory, as has often been pointed out in numerous instances; although it would be as unreasonable to object this in order to disparage the grounds of our common faith, as it would be to
except

* Epist. to the *Corin. Sect. 12.*

except, with the same view, against the eccentricity of some of this Father's tenets, or those of any others in any other respects; as, e. g. that hell-torments will not be eternal, for which assertion he had certainly *no Scriptural warrant*; or that the *angel* with whom *Jacob wrested* was an *evil* one, which was likewise a notion of *Origen's*; or that souls after their separation from bodies retain many corporeal properties, as *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* imagin'd, &c. &c. In truth, orthodoxy may be said to be built upon the foundation of the *Apostles and Prophets*, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone*, and has no concern with these particularities; and much less with the conceits which the luxuriance of piety itself has sometimes given birth to. The Father I last named whimsically asserted, that the devil invented *bushkins*, that a man might ADD TO HIS STATURE, notwithstanding what our Saviour says to the contrary; and gravely informs us in another place, that this prince of darkness, or one of his infernal ministers, upon being exorcised out of a certain woman, who was a frequenter of stage-entertainments, complained loudly that he was dispossessed of his property; the theatre being his own ground! *Clemens of Alexandria* advises us to *lay our heads upon stone*, as *Jacob* did, in order to our having visions, &c. &c. But of such harmless extravagance infidelity strives in vain to avail itself.

Whether

Whether St. *Barnabas*, who was St. *Paul's* companion and fellow-labourer, was the author of the catholic Epistle to which his name is prefixed, is a question undecided at this day. Much has been urged on this subject *pro* and *con* by learned men; nor am I concerned to inquire, on which side the arguments preponderate. It will suffice to say, that many have thought the allegorical interpretation of Scripture with which the performance abounds, by far too imaginary, or indeed too trifling for the pen of one of the *Minor Apostles*, as *Vossius* calls him. This able critic is however a strong advocate for him, and the primitive fathers in general; and gives it as his clear opinion, that nothing of this kind in him, or in St. *Clement*, (from whom he extracts the particulars above noticed,) ought in reason to be alledged to the discredit of their writings. His words are these. *Quis a primis illis Christianis omnigenam scientiam, et doctrinam expostulet? Quis illos non æque hallucinatos existimet atque eorum nepotes; præsertim in rebus nihil ad fidem pertinentibus? Nunquid et in Epistola Clementis similia occurrunt? Quis enim bono animo conquire possit fabellam illam quam de Phœnice narrat, &c? Non puto etiam quemquam velle admittere expositionem istam, ut linteum coccineum Rahab meretricis* signum fuerit sanguinis Christi, &c. Atqui tamen iste*

* N. B. Many are of opinion that Rahab was no harlot.

Clemens

Clemens pari jure atque Barnabas dictus est Apostolus. Non debent itaque in hoc reprehendere, quod in altero excusant. † But it should be remembered all this while, that *Vossius* vindicates the authenticity of *St. Barnabas's* Epistle, so called, by a very unequal comparison. The Epistle of *St. Clement*, and those of other fathers are interspersed more or less with typical application, but they are not distinguished by it. (*See St. BARNABAS's Epist. particularly Sect. 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14.*)

I would take this opportunity to observe, that the doctrine of types and symbols, as it has been revived by many moderns, so has it by some been upheld with a zeal which, in going beyond the bounds of judgment, has, it may be, done disservice to Christianity. Let me ask the most sanguine advocates for symbols and prefigurations, how they relish this mode of speculation in the *Romanists*, when, among the arguments which they adduce in pretended proof of *St. Peter's* primacy, they tell us his SHIP, out of which the Lord taught the people, was an emblem or type of the Christian Church? In short, the doctrine of types in general is, in my opinion, too often at best more ingenious than solid, and has a stronger foundation in fancy than in fact. Perhaps the reader may be entertained as well as convinced by two or three select instances. The coat of the *Jewish* High-priest, says *Dr. Lightfoot*, "fitly resembled Christ's hu-
" man

† *Vossii Notæ ad Barnabæ Epist. Cathol.*

“man nature : first, as this was of one stuff without mixture, so that without sin, &c. secondly, as this was put on after an extraordinary manner, so Christ put on humanity by an extraordinary conception ; thirdly, as was the edge about the hole to keep it from rending, such was the unseparable union of Christ’s two natures ; fourthly as were the bells and pomegranates, such were his life and doctrine.” Another learned writer, Mr. *Mede*, speaking of the *manna* and the *rock* in the *wilderness*, which are mentioned by St. *Paul* as types of Christ, 1 Cor. 10. v. 3, 4. expatiates in the following words. “ As *Manna* came from heaven beside the ordinary course of nature, so Christ’s birth was wonderful, &c. As *Manna* was of a most sweet taste, so is Christ unto the soul, &c. As *Manna* was of a white colour, so our Saviour was white and pure. As *Manna* before it was eaten was brayed in a mortar, &c. so was Christ our heavenly manna broken upon the Cross, &c. As the *rock* gave no water before it was smitten with the *rod* of *Moses*, so was Christ smitten upon the Cross, that out of him might flow that sovereign stream, which he who *drinketh* shall *never thirst*. As the *rock* was smitten with the *rod* of *Moses*, so was Christ our redeemer with the rod of the Law, &c. With much more to this effect.” According to a modern author, Mr. *Calcott*, the *Jewish* tabernacle or temple was a type of the body

Y

of

of Christ. The *table*, the *show-bread*, &c. were all emblematical, and significative of the properties, &c. of *Jesus Christ*, dwelling in a *tabernacle of flesh*. The table e. g. was compounded of two sorts of materials, *wood* and *gold*, and it was a piece of furniture which exhibited a compound person, &c ; it was a type of that person who should be compounded of *Jehovah* and *Adam*, God and Man. In Mr. *Bates's Faith of the antient Jews*, the *right ear* is made to stand for *obedience* ; the *thumb* of the *right hand* for *actions* ; the *great toe* of the *right foot* for *ways* ; *shoulder* for *consent*, &c. For farther satisfaction the reader may consult, if he pleases, *LESLEY's Truth of Christian. Sect. 13.* *POTTER on Ch. Gov. p. 50.* *ALLIX's Reflect. p. 232, and vol. 2. p. 182.* *PEARSON on the Cr. p. 76.* *BARROW on the Cr. p. 107. 205.* See *MEDR. B. I. Disc. 44. p. 249.* *LIGHTFOOT.* See *LANGHORN's Let. between Theo. and Const. p. 93.* *TERTUL. de Spectal. c. 26. &c. &c.*

Page 124. (*p*) *minor authority.*] The Epistles from which the extracts are made, (if we except the last,) have ever been held by the Church in general in the highest estimation. They were written by men who, it is well known, were intimately acquainted with the Apostles. *Polycarp* was a disciple of St. *John* ; and his Epistle to the *Philippians*, with the first of St. *Clement* to the *Corinthians*, were for several centuries publicly read in the Churches

Churches of *Asia*. * Their authority therefore is little inferior to Apostolical.

I will transcribe a passage or two from the *ante-nicene* fathers, and leave the weight of the whole with the reader. Εκεινον, και τον παρ' αυτε υον, πνευμα τε το προφητικον σεβομεθα, &c, says *Justin Martyr*: Apol. I. c. 6. Προς αυτε, και δι' αυτε παντα εγενετο, says *Athenagoras*, ενος οντος τε πατρος και τε υιου. οντος υιου εν πατρι, και πατρος εν υιω, ενότητι και δυναμει πνευματος. *Legatio pro Chris.* p. 10. Nothing can be more express, simple, and unequivocal than these declarations.

And again, in contempt of, or rather in astonishment at the charge of Atheism, which the heathens brought against the first Christians, the same father asks, τις εν εκ αν απορησαι, λεγοντας Θεον Πατερα, και υιον Θεον, και πνευμα αγιον, δεικνυντας αυτων και την εν τη ενωσην δυναμιν, και την εν τη ταξει δειαιρεσιν, ακεστας αδεως καλουμενους; *Ibid.* p. 11.

Tertullian calls the Holy Ghost *tertium numen Divinitatis*, and *tertium gradum majestatis*. *Irenæus* calls the *Word Dei æternum verbum*, † and, according to him, *Jesus Christ* is *Filius Dei existens semper apud Patrem*.

It may be proper to take notice in this place, that the equality we are contending for is not in

* See CH. 10. of WAKE'S DISCOURSE prefixed to his Translation of these Epistles.

† See STEPHENS'S Ser. on the Eter. Genera. who illustrates this doctrine by a multitude of testimonies from p. 44. to p. 50.

the left disturbed by the disagreement betwixt the *Greek* and *Latin* Church, with respect to the *procession* of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of the former was, that the *Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father by the Son, and is the Spirit of the Son*; non ex Filio, sed spiritum Filii esse dicimus, et Patris per Filium. This doctrine is erroneous indeed, but innocently so. For, as Archbp. *Laud*,* and many others have observed, the question, whether the Holy Ghost proceeds *a Filio*, or *per Filium*, is but a question *in modo loquendi*; a mere difference in words, and affects not the faith. And therefore I cannot think Bp. *Taylor* argues candidly, or logically, in the following passage. “The procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son, which is an article the *Greek* Church disavows, derives from the Tradition Apostolical, as it is pretended; and yet before St. *Austin* we hear nothing of it very clearly or certainly, forasmuch as that whole mystery concerning the blessed Spirit was so little explicated in Scripture, and so little derived to them by tradition, that till the Council of *Nice*, you shall hardly find any form of worship, or personal address of devotion to the Holy Spirit, as *Erasmus* observes, and I think the contrary will very hardly be verified.”† The Holy Ghost

* See *Laud* against *Fisher*. p. 24.

† Bp. *Taylor* on *Lib. of Pro. Sect.* 5. p. 90.

is expressly styled by St. *Peter* the *Spirit of Christ* which, in the next sentence, is said to have been *sent down from heaven*; 1 Pet. 1. v. 10, 12. and I take it to be fully as presumeable that the article of the *procession* in question was grounded in the construction which this passage naturally admits, as that it “derived from tradition Apostolical;” notwithstanding the immaterial disagreement above-mentioned. But whether this difference with respect to the mode of *procession* took its rise from different construction, or from different tradition, the faith both of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church in the third Person of the Trinity was still built on a sure foundation. Eternity of generation, and procession, and existence, is equally inexplicable; and though nothing was, or, in the nature of things, could be “explicated in “Scripture” in respect of the whole mystery, yet, I apprehend, enough was *revealed*. Even if the first Christians had not addressed the blessed Spirit in any form of devotion at all, this could not have been owing to their want of comprehension of the mode of *procession*, but to their disbelief of his personality, and eternal existence. But that the primitive Christians, and the *ante-nicene* fathers believed the personality and eternal existence of the *Spirit*, and consequently his coequality with the *Father* and the *Son*, sufficiently, I trust, appears from the testimonies produced; and therefore ad-

mitting that most of the prayers of the Church were addressed to the *Father*, and few only to the *Son*, and fewer to the *Holy Ghost*, (which is far from being a matter unaccountable,) we have ample proofs that Christians worshipped "one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity." *Erasmus* does not venture to assert, that no addressees were made to the Holy Ghost; and, if he had, we might confront him with the above cited declaration of *Justin Martyr*; which at least supposes this Divine Person to have been included, and frequently named in the supplications of the first Christians. ΕΝΕΝΘΡ, ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΤ' ΑΥΤΗ ΜΟΥ, ΠΝΥΜΑ ΤΙ, &c.

But we are by no means destitute of antient testimonies to the same effect. The accounts of the martyrdom of *Ignatius* and *Polycarp* conclude with ascriptions of glory, &c. to the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*. † The relation of the sufferings of the former closes with these words; "who trod under foot the Devil, and perfected the course he had piously desired, in Christ Jesus our Lord; by whom, and with whom, all glory and power be to the Father, with the blessed Spirit, for ever and ever." The Epistle of the Church of *Smyrna* to the Church of *Philadelphia*, concerning the Martyrdom of *Polycarp*, concludes as follows: "We wish you, brethren, all happiness by

† See WAKE'S Relation of these Martyrdoms. p. 137, 152.

"living

“ living according to the rule of the Gospel of
 “ Jesus Christ ; with whom glory be to God the
 “ Father, and the Holy Spirit, &c.” In *Clemens*
 of *Alexandria* there is a prayer and doxology to
 the Trinity in these words : “ Be merciful unto thy
 “ children, O Master, O Father, &c ; O Son and
 “ Father, both one ; O Lord, grant that we may
 “ pass the waves of this troublesome world, con-
 “ tinually praising and giving thanks to the only
 “ Father and Son, to the Son and Father, to the
 “ Son our Master and Teacher, together with the
 “ Holy Ghost, altogether one, in whom are all
 “ things, &c. &c.” Add to this, that the doxo-
 logies in the antient Liturgies were some of them
 expressed in fuller and stronger terms than that used
 in our daily services.

It is affirmed by Mr. *Lindsey* in his *Apology*, that
 the Fathers of the three first centuries were all
 what we now call *Arians* or *Sacnians*. We might
 ask this Gentleman in the words of *Dathan*, &c.,
 but on much better grounds, *wilt thou put out the*
eyes of Christians ? The assertion has hardly its
 fellow in the whole circle of polemical divinity.
 Let these venerable Fathers speak for themselves.
 I take this opportunity to put the reader in mind
 of the same Gentleman’s very disingenuous transla-
 tion of that passage in *Justin Martyr*’s dialogue
 with *Trypho*, where he tells him, that there were
 those who admitted Christ to be the Messiah, tho’

they believed him to be mere man. The whole passage is perfectly scrutinized, and a shameful omission of Mr. *Lindsey* taken notice of in Mr. BINGHAM's *Vindication of the Doctrine, &c. of the Church of England*, p. 23, 24, 25. See also Dr. RANDOLPH's *Vindicat. of the Trinity*, part 3, p. 40. and Bp. BULL's *Judic. Eccles. Cathol.* cap. 7mo, where he charges the *Remonstrants* with mutilating and curtailling this very passage. With what face will Mr. L. lay *Socinianism*, or *Arianism* at the door of *Justin Martyr*?

The passage quoted from this father in the former part of this note is so strong and explicit, that it probably gave occasion to some *Socinians* to aver, that HE was the first who taught the doctrine of the Trinity. I said, *some Socinians*, because, as we have already noted, most *Socinians* and *Socinus* himself fathers this doctrine upon the Council of *Nice*, with an absurdity which is exposed at large by Bp. Bull in his Defence of that Council. This duplicity is no small argument of *Socinian* distress.

Dr. *Middleton*, in resentment, I presume, of that explicitness with which *Justin Martyr* in the place referred to, and in many other, asserts the doctrine of the Trinity, and with a view to counteract it, takes much pains to represent his interpretation of Scripture as frequently absurd, and his doctrine as neither more nor less than refined *Platonism*. But the

the unfairness, or rather the falsity of both imputations has often been shewn. The *triad* of *Plato*, (whose admirer, &c. this holy father, it is well known, before his conversion was,) the *mundane*, *animative*, and *intelligent* nature of God, although it has been mentioned by some, improperly but honestly enough, to illustrate the doctrine in question, with an intention to adapt it in some degree to our apprehensions, could not possibly give rise to it. It is as clear as words can make it, that *Justin* the *Martyr* was a *Trinitarian* on principles very different from those of *Justin* the *philosopher*. Dr. M. most uncandidly vilifies the typical and allegorical representations, which occur often in this primitive writer, and in which probably he gratified not so much his own taste as that of those early ages.

Dr. *Whitby*, in his treatise entitled, *An Endeavour to evince the certainty of Christian faith*, &c, cites historians of credit, who acquaint us, that when *Julian's* design of falsifying the predictions of our Saviour, by rebuilding the Temple of *Jerusalem*, was defeated by miraculous eruptions of balls of fire, &c, (as the story is told by *Ammianus Marcellinus*, and many others,) almost all the *Jews*, who were eye-witnesses of this wonderful scene, were converted to the Christian Faith, and acknowledged Christ to be God. The writers referred to are *Sozomen*, *Nazianzen*, and *Socrates*, and the following passage seems to be as plain and decisive as can be wished.

wished. Εκ τούτων τούτων τῶν ὁρωμένων καταπληξίς, ὡς μικροῦ μὲν, ἀπαντὰς ὥσπερ ἐξ ἑνὸς συνθηματος, καὶ μίας φωνῆς, τὸν χριστὸν ἀνακαλεῖσθαι θεόν, εὐφημαῖς τε πολλαῖς καὶ ἰκισιαῖς ἐξίλασκεισθαι.

It seems evident enough from these words, that the *Jews* who were converted on this occasion, and consequently Christians in general, at that time acknowledged Jesus Christ to be absolutely God.

Indeed the truth of this great doctrine is in some measure inferrible from the incredibility formerly objected to it by its adversaries. Καταβαίνειν εἰς τὴν γῆν τινα θεόν, ἡ Θεοῦ υἱόν, τοῦτ' αἰχίζον, says *Celsus*; and *Trypho* speaks rather resentingly in the following words to *Justin*; ἀπιστον γὰρ καὶ ἀδυνατόν σχεδὸν πρᾶγμα ἐπιχειρεῖς, ἀποδεικνύναι, ὅτι θεὸς ὑπεμέμεινε γεννηθῆναι, καὶ ἀνθρώπος γενεσθαι.

Agreeably to this, the same *Trypho* declares, that to assert Christ to have been born of a virgin is τερατολογεῖν. Now I desire to ask, whether the doctrine of a miraculous birth, and bodily appearance of an *inferior* Deity for any supposable purpose whatever, be not sufficiently reconcileable both with *Jewish* and *Pagan* principles, and with what we know to have been the sentiments of *Julian* himself? Or, whether we are not in all reason to look for the chief ground of difference between *Justin* and *Trypho* in the coequality we are asserting? This will appear yet more clearly in a subsequent note. It is, in short, this equality which constituted

constituted *superstitionis novæ genus*, as Christianity is called by *Suetonius* in the life of *Nero*.

Dr. *Willes*, in his first discourse, prefixed to Sir *Rog. L'Estrange's* translation of *Josephus*, says that *Pilate* wrote to *Tiberius* de Christo Deo. But where does he find this? The Acts of *Pilate*, so called, are confessedly spurious.

CELSUS *apud* ORIG. l. 4. JUSTIN's Dial. p. 292.
LACTANTIUS. l. 4. c. 12 and 22.

Page 125. (q) *the Atheism.*] The venom of this calumny soon spent itself; and the honourable and often-noted testimony of *Pliny* in his letter to *Trajan*, that the Christians were a *simple* and *innocent* people who worshipped Christ as God, at once vindicates their morals, and declares their faith.

The fact was, the primitive Christians, like their immediate predecessors the Apostles, were reviled, defamed, and made as the *filth of the world*, and the *off-scouring of all things*; they were charged with the most detestable vices; with rebellion, murder, incest, &c; and to free them from these infamous reproaches, was one main business of the fathers in general, and especially of *Justin Martyr*, *Atbenagoras*, and *Tertullian*.

WHITBY's *Endeavour*, &c. ch. 8. p. 243.

Page 126. (r) *principles of polytheism.*] *Hesiod* makes mention of many thousand Deities, and *Varro* of three hundred *Jupiters*; but both with a reservation of the properties and prerogatives of the

the Supreme God. These subaltern Deities were supposed to act as his instruments, and under his direction. Some of the wiser heathens however were ashamed of this latitudinarian system; and pretended to resolve their theology into allegory, &c, as *Zeno*, *Chrysippus*, and other Stoics; and philosophers of later date found it necessary to have recourse to the same expedient to elude the charge brought against the multitude of the heathen Gods by Christians. With respect to the Pagan notion of a subordination of Deities, we may affirm in the words of Dr. *Heylin*, that God is not only *unus*, but *unicus*, or in the phrase of Mr. *Hooker*, that “our God is one, or rather very *oneness*, in which essential unity, says he, a Trinity personal subsisteth.”

It will be well worth remarking, that the doctrine of the Trinity has often been represented as having no little colour or countenance both from *Jewish* and *Pagan* principles. A. *Rofs*,* in his *View of all religions*, &c. undertakes to shew, that “the doctrine of the Trinity was not unknown even by the light of nature to the Gentile philosophers, poets, &c. *Zoroastres*, says he, speaks of the Father, who, having perfected all things, hath delivered them to the second Mind, which Mind hath received from the Father knowledge

* See Note at No. 38.

“ and

“ and power. Here is a plain testimony of the first
 “ and second Person. Concerning the third, *Zoroastres*
 “ *tres* faith, that the Divine Love proceeded from
 “ the Mind or Intellect; and what else is this Di-
 “ vine Love but the Holy Ghost?” He then pro-
 ceeds to lay before the reader the principles of the
Chaldean Magi, who “acknowledged three begin-
 “ nings, to wit, *Ormases*, *Mitris*, and *Ariminis*,
 “ i. e. God, the Mind, and Soul.” He observes that
 “ *Pythagoras* was not ignorant of this mystery,
 “ when he placed all perfection in the number
 “ THREE, and made Love the original of all
 “ things.” He gives us the sentiments of *Zeno*,
Socrates, *Numenius*, *Plotinus*, and many others,
 “ who write very plainly of the *Hypostases*, &c, so
 “ that no Christian can write more fully.”

Let us hear now what a much better known,
 and an universally admired author has to offer upon
 the same argument. From the three divine attri-
 butes of infinite Goodness, Wisdom, and Power,
 the *Pythagoreans* and *Platonists* seem to have framed
 their *Trinity* of what Dr. *Cudworth* calls *Archichal*
Hypostases: to which he supposes *Aristotle* may be
 thought to allude in the following passage in his
 book *de celo.* l. i. c. i. καθάπερ γὰρ φασί (the Py-
 thagoreans) τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὰ πάντα τοῖς τρισὶ διωρίαι.

In another place, this learned author gives us to
 understand, that *Zoroastres*, and the ancient *Magi*
 acknowledged the Supreme Deity under the different
 names

names of *Mitbras* and *Oromasius*; which *Mitbrás* was commonly called τριπλασιος or three-fold. This, it seems, *J. Vossius* would refer to the three *hypostases* in the Deity, agreeably to the Christian theory: but *Cudworth* thinks it to be more conformable to the *Pythagoric* or *Platonic* hypothesis of three distinct substances subordinate to each other. This writer observes elsewhere, that *Pagan* theology in general maintained a *Trinity* of universal principles, or Divine *hypostases* subordinate; the το αγαθον, or το ΕΝ called ο πρωτος Θεος; and ΝΟΥΣ or intellect, ο δευτερος, the second God; and the mundane Soul, or animated world, τριτος Θεος, the third God. According to the same author, the *Crocodile* was a symbol of the first God of the *Ægyptians*; “an animal which when in the water sees “without being seen:” and among the same people a *winged globe with a serpent springing out of it*, was the *Hieroglyphic* of a triform Deity, or *Trinity* of Divine *Hypostases*. By the globe was signified the first incomprehensible Deity, without beginning or end, self-existent, &c; by the *Serpent*, the Divine wisdom and creative virtue; and by the *wings*, that active Spirit which quickens, enlivens, and cherishes all things.

Let us see now what was the theology of *Julian*, and the latter *Platonists*. This famous Apostate maintained, that the inferior Gods were ministers of a supreme God. He asserted, that this Supreme God, or first Deity, and fountain of all things, produced
from

from himself, an eternal mind, and a corporeal, or “sensible animated Sun,” as a great God in the visible world. The latter *Platonists*, in opposition to Christianity, held, that before the Trinity there was another supreme and highest *Hypostasis*, existing and remaining in the *solitude of his own unity*, as Dr. *Cudworth* literally translates the words of *Jamblicus*. This must at least be allowed to be language somewhat more intelligible than that of those old *Platonists* who taught, that there is a substance, a principle “in the order of nature superior to intellect.” They suppose this first and highest principle of all, to be, by reason of its absolute and transcendent perfection, not only above understanding, knowledge, and reason, but above essence itself; which, by the way, was the heresy of *A. Joachim*, condemned by the fourth *Lateran Council*. Our Author very justly calls this visionary doctrine *mysterious Atheism*; and it seems to have been adopted by that fantastic heretic *Valentinus*, whose thirty Gods, or *Æons*, were the production or offspring of a self-originated Deity, whom he calls *Bythus*, or Βυθος, i. e. unfathomable *profundity*; or, according to some, of *profundity and silence*. Even the theory of *Hesiod*, whether literally, or physiologically understood, is much more agreeable to truth, and the *Mosaic history*. This old bard makes *Chaos*, and *Earth*, and *Tartarus*, and *Love*, the principles of all things. (*Theo-*

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gon. v. 116. and seq.) In short, the philosophy we have been just speaking of absolutely refines away all religion, and the very belief of a God; because Divinity in the abstract can no more be said to produce, to act, or to govern, &c. than *wisdom* can be said to be *wise*, or *motion* to *move*.

At best, little solid or consistent can be extracted from this medley of principles; and if we understand by a *Trinity*, what in reason we ought to understand by it, viz. a *Trinity of three efficient, living, intelligent Persons, the sovereign causes and rulers of all things*, (to use the words of a learned † writer,) we shall look in vain for such a doctrine properly and precisely taught before the epoch of Christianity. It is certain, the antient Pagan Theology derived partly from tradition, and partly from *Judaism*. In the doctrines of the latter we are to look for the rise and foundation of the principal tenets of the Philosophers whose names have been mentioned; of whom some are known to have had communications with the *Jews*. What then were the sentiments of these descendants of *Abraham* heretofore with respect to the great doctrine before us? The question is a material one; and, unless I greatly mistake, the solution of it will terminate in a very satisfactory conclusion.

Christian writers differ but little in what they

† See Extract from an anonymous Author quoted by Dr. RANDOLPH in his *Vindica*. p. 51. &c.

have

have advanced upon this head. To take a few of them as they fall in our way. *Wollebius* lays down the following principle as an indubitable one. *Et si Veteris Testamenti tempore doctrina S. S. Trinitatis obscurior fuerit, non tamen plane ignota fuit.* He then quotes the first *Chap.* of *Genesis*, and other passages in the Old Testament, in common with other authors, in support of his position, or his *Canon*, as he calls it, and finishes the paragraph in the following words; *quæ testimonia tametsi pertinaces Judæi eludere satagunt, Christianæ tamen menti satisfaciunt.* The learned Dr. *Lightfoot*'s sentiments on this subject, which Mr. *Parkhurst* has adopted, or rather with particular warmth espoused, are as follows.

“ The very first thing, says he, that is taught “ in all the Bible * is this very mystery.” God *created*; God, i. e. the Word *said*; and the Spirit, i. e. the Holy Ghost *moved*. “ So *Moses* also when “ he is to teach concerning the creation of man, he “ first teacheth that it was the Trinity that created “ him. *And God said, Let us make man after our “ image.* He saith *Let us*, to shew the Trinity of “ Persons; and he saith *in our image*, not *in our “ images*, to shew the unity of essence.” The Trinity is supposed by Dr. L. to be declared in many places; even at v. 4. of Deut. 6. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one.* Dr. L. gives

* See Genesis 1. 1, 2, 3, &c.

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this

this as the true reading, which, says he, “ teaches “ the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity. “ Three words answer the three Persons, and the “ middle word our God, deciphering fitly the Second, who assumed our nature.” This learned writer supposes the same mystery to be imported in the following among many other texts. *Exo.* 34. v. 6. *Isa.* 6. v. 3. *Psalms* 50. v. 1. 136. v. 1, 2, 3.

Indeed, Jesus Christ is by the almost unanimous suffrage of writers the *Jehovah* of the Old Testament. The *Angel of the Covenant*, the *Angel* who appeared to *Moses* at the *bush*, the chief of the *Angels* who were entertained by *Abraham*, &c, is generally supposed to have been the Second Person in the † Trinity. A sensible writer endeavours to prove, that the doctrine of the Trinity is contained in the *Law*, and that it is in fact acknowledged and asserted by the *Jewish* Rabbies, by *Philo* and *Maimonides*, &c. The *Jewish Cabalists*, says he, “ distinguish God into three Lights; and some of them “ call them by the same names, as the Christians, “ of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; “ and yet say that this does not at all break the “ Unity of God. Your famous *Philo*, says he, expresses the same in many places.” And he produces a considerable number of instances, by which it appears that this celebrated Rabbini at least lays

† See particularly ALLIX. BULL. JUSTIN MARTYR. IRENÆUS, and TERTULLIAN.

himself

himself open to the attacks of every Christian adversary.

To the same effect Dr. *Randolph* quotes a remarkable passage from *Eusebius*, in which it is observed, that, according to the doctrine of the *Jews*,
 “ there is, after the Essence of God, &c, a principle begotten of no other but the Father, being
 “ first-begotten, &c, being the image of God, the
 “ power of God, the wisdom of God, and the word
 “ of God ; the true light, the *Sun of righteousness*,
 “ &c, &c.”

There are two striking passages, the one in the book of *Proverbs*, and the other in the *apocryphal* book entitled the *Wisdom of Solomon*, which have been pretty generally considered as designative of the Second Person in the Christian Trinity. *I was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was. When he prepared the heavens, I was there ; when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him, as one brought up with him, &c.* (Prov. 8. v. 22. &c.) *When all things were in quiet silence, thine Almighty Word leapt down from heaven out of thy royal throne, &c, &c.* (Wisd. 18. v. 15. &c.)

The anonymous Author of the testaments of the twelve Patriarchs, (who, as Dr. *Grabe* supposes, wrote at the latter end of the second century,) makes every one of them foretell the coming of the Messiah, and most of them, in the plainest terms, the incarnation of the Son of God, or rather simply of God.

All this put together, intricate or incoherent as it may appear, will be thought most clearly to import a Trinity of some kind in the Godhead ; and we may accordingly discern in a moment wherein lies the precise difference between the *Pagan*, the *Jewish*, the *Arian*, and the true Christian theory. By the hypothesis of each of the three former, the Supreme God neither is nor can be more than One Person ; by that of the latter, the Deity consists of three Persons and one undivided essence. This as manifestly resists the idea of dependence and inferiority, as the other is compatible with it, or rather, under the notion of a Trinity, supposes it. In short, it will, I presume, be no easy matter to say what objection of weight *Jews*, and *Gentiles*, *Pythagoreans*, and *Platonists*, could have made to the Gospel, what obstacle there was to their *becoming obedient to the faith without delay*, except that the universally adopted principle of SUBORDINATION was superseded, and effectually destroyed by the peculiarly Christian doctrine of EQUALITY.

Perhaps I shall be thought to take upon me here the character of Moderator in the dispute between Mr. *Parkhurst* and Dr. *Priestly*. I had no such intention. But if what has been offered does not exactly coincide with the notions of the former, it will at least in the result be subversive of the principles of the latter. The Christian doctrine of an equal Trinity will be established by the acknowledgement

knowledge of a plurality of any kind, respecting the Godhead, by *Jews*, antient, or modern, or both. With regard to the notions of *Philo*, &c, see *Howes's Remarks in Vindication of the antient Fathers* &c. p. 41, 42, and seq.

It is observable, in conformity herewith, that the Fathers in general consider the doctrine of the Trinity, in the sense of the Catholic Church, as that which characteristically discriminates Christianity both from Judaism and Heathenism. With respect to the former, *Tertullian* has these remarkable words; *Judaicæ fidei est res, sic unum Deum credere, ut Filium adnumera re ei nolis, et post Filium, Spiritum. Quid enim erit inter nos et illos nisi differentia ista? Quod opus Evangelii? Quæ est substantia Novi Testamenti, statuens Legem et Prophetas usque ad Johannem, si non exinde Pater, Filius, et Spiritus, tres crediti, unum Deum sistunt?*

HOOKER's Eccles. Pol. p. A. ROSS's View of all Rel. Sect. 7. p. 185. CUDWORTH's Intell. Sys. p. 206. WOLLEBIUS's Compen. Theol. l. 1. c. 2. p. 15. LIGHTFOOT on Gen. 1. STACKHOUSE's Hist. of Bib. Ch. 1. p. 223. Bp. ANDREWS's Lect. p. 552. LOWTH's Direct. for reading S. S. p. 68, 69. See PATRICK's Notes at Exod. 3. v. 14. 6. v. 3. 18. v. 2. TERTULL. adv. Prax. c. 31. See Mr. PARKHURST's Tract on the Divinity, &c. of our Lord from p. 1. to p. 46. See JONES. Chap. 3. Sect. 1, 2, 3. See PATRICK on Gen. 1. v. 26. LESLIE's

Short Method with the Jews. p. 88. RANDOLPH's *Vindica. of the Doctrine of the Trinity.* pt. I. p. 21. GRABE's *Note at Sect. 2, c. 3. of BULL's Defense.*

Page 129. (s) *Son of Mary.*] Nothing can be more ridiculous than the *Mahometan* notions respecting the birth of our Saviour. *Mary* is supposed to have conceived by the breath of *Gabriel*. Yet in the nineteenth Chapter of the *Koran*, the following inconsistent and impious expressions are put into the mouth of the Deity himself. *We sent our Spirit Gabriel to Mary in the shape of a perfect man.*

Mr. *Sale* observes, that *Mahomet's* account of the delivery of *Mary* is like the fabulous one of *Latona*. Both, it seems, were delivered by a *palm-tree*; and in the womb of the latter *Apollo* spoke, as in that of the former, say some, did *Jesus*. Possibly this may be a refinement upon the *Koran* itself; or upon the circumstance of the *babe's leaping in the womb of Elisabeth*. Luke i. 41.

See *Sale's* Note at Ch. 19. of the *Koran*.

Page 131. (t) *God is one God.*] It is the tenet of all true *Mussulmen*, says the author of *Mahometism explained*, that the most abandoned sinners that ever existed shall be saved, "provided they shall
" once during their lives have testified the Unity
" of God, by pronouncing that fundamental article of the *Mussulman* belief, *there is no God but*
" *ALLAH*, and *MAHOMET is his Apostle.*" This,

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I conceive, must be understood with some restriction, and supposes no apostacy subsequent to the attestation in question. For the famous *Mahometan* Doctor, *Algazali*, in his comment on these two capital articles of their faith, delivers himself in the following words. *He shall also believe that they that confess one God shall at length go out of the fire, after they have underwent the punishment due to their sins; so that by the favourable mercy of God, no person shall remain in hell who acknowledged the Unity of the Godhead.*

The first *Mussulmen* gloried in the title of *Unitarians* upon every occasion. Some of them carried their zeal for the grand article of their religion to a degree of savage ferocity. We have a notable example of this in the history of the *Saracens*. At the siege of *Damascus*, in the reign of *Omar*, the second *Caliph* after *Mahomet*, *Abu-Obeidah*, the commander of the *Saracen* army, had granted quarter to certain citizens; which was a piece of lenity so exasperating to *Derar*, an officer of very high rank, as to draw from him a declaration, seconded by the solemnity of an oath, that, for his part, *he would never have mercy upon any that said that God had a son, and joined a partner with God.*

We learn from the anonymous author of *Four Treatises*, &c, (who assures us he derives his authorities from writers of the first class,) that the *Mahometans* carry this *unitarian* principle with them

literally

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literally to their graves. His account of their funeral solemnities is entertaining enough ; but the following are the only particulars with which we are at all concerned. At the interment of a *Musfulman* the *Muezzin*, or Cryer, must go before the corps, reciting with a loud voice, *there is no God but very God*. At the close of the whole ceremony, the defunct is addressed by the priest in these words. *Be mindful of the covenant with which thou hast gone out of this world ; bearing witness that there is no God but very God alone, and that Mahomet is his prophet, and that Paradise is for certain, and fire for certain, and the resurrection for certain ; &c, &c.*

How shall we reconcile all this with Mr. *Locke's* assertion, that “ to the light which the Messiah brought into the world with him, we must ascribe “ the owning and profession of one God, which “ the Mahometan religion hath derived and borrowed from it.” Strange assertion ! The *Mahometan* faith is this, that there is one Person in the Godhead ; the Catholic faith is this, that there are three Persons in one Godhead. Remove this difference ; and you will make a considerable breach in the *middle wall of partition* between the two religions. (*See Disc. 4th. sub fin.*)

Reasonab. of Christianity. p. 86. Comment prefixed to the 2d. Vol. of OCKLEY's History of the Saracens. OCKLEY's Hist. of the Saracens, Vol. I. p. 227, 134.

Treatise

Treatise concerning the Turkish Liturgy. p. 139, 142.

Page 132. (v) *Papal innovation.*] The *Arians* in *Poland*, soon after the *Reformation*, most ridiculously attempted to represent the doctrine of the Trinity as the most anti-christian of all corruptions in the Church of *Rome*; and would have fain had it believed, that Providence permitted the Pope to wear a *triple* crown, as a mark denoting him to be a maintainer of that doctrine.

See HOOKER's *Ecclef. Pol. B. 4.* p. 142.

Page 144. (u) *tables of man's heart.*] *Burlamaque*; in his book entitled *Principles of natural and politic Law*, observes somewhere, that "moral
"maxims or actions are as certain, as much dic-
"tated by pure reason, as physical, or mathema-
"tical ones." That the Creator, e. g., says he, is to be worshipped &c, by the creature, is as self-evident as that the whole is greater than its parts. Bp. *Cumberland* calls the Law of nature immutable, eternal, and universal. ‡ I cannot think Bp. *Taylor* expresses himself with accuracy, and much less with true casuistical precision, in the following passage extracted by Dr. *W. Lowth* from the *Ductor Dubitantium*. "If we be sent to read the laws of
"nature in the tables of our own hearts, where
"some things are disordered by passion, many more

‡ *Dissertation on the Law of Nature.* p. 89.

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“ are written by interest ; some are indited by
 “ custom, and others imprinted by education ; and
 “ amongst several men these are the authors of con-
 “ trary inscriptions ; I say, if we have no better
 “ director than this, whereby to square our actions,
 “ we shall find ourselves at a loss for the managing
 “ our behaviour in some of the weightiest concerns
 “ of life.” The *inscriptions* of passion, interest,
 and custom, &c, are not those *original* impressions
 which are still legible, and sufficiently distinguish-
 able by a candid and inquisitive mind. The law of
 nature, abstractedly considered, is still what Bp.
Cumberland calls it.

That obnoxiousness to error from which men of
 the brightest parts, and the greatest professional
 abilities, are not exempt, is to writers in general
 at once an encouraging and an humbling circum-
 stance.

The corruption of human reason, and the igno-
 rance and error incident to our understandings,
 “ has, says a most excellent author, given manifold
 “ occasion for the benign interposition of Divine
 “ Providence, which in compassion to the frailty,
 “ the imperfection, and the blindness of human
 “ reason, hath been pleased at sundry times, and in
 “ divers manners, to discover and enforce its laws
 “ by an immediate and direct Revelation. The
 “ doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or
 “ Divine law, and they are to be found only in the
 “ Scriptures.

“ Scriptures. These precepts when revealed are
 “ found upon comparison to be really a part of
 “ the original law of nature, as they tend in all
 “ their consequences to man’s felicity. But we are
 “ not from hence to conclude, that the knowlege
 “ of these truths was attainable by reason in its
 “ present corrupted state ; since we find that, until
 “ they were revealed, they were hid from the wif-
 “ dom of ages. As then the moral precepts of
 “ this law are indeed of the same original with
 “ those of the law of nature, so their intrinsic ob-
 “ ligation is of equal strength and perpetuity. Yet
 “ undoubtedly the revealed law is of infinitely
 “ more authenticity than that moral system which
 “ is framed by ethical writers, and denominated
 “ the natural law. Because one is the law of na-
 “ ture, expressly declared so to be by God him-
 “ self ; the other is only what, by the assistance of
 “ human reason, we imagine to be that law. If
 “ we could be as certain of the latter as we are of
 “ the former, both would have an equal authority ;
 “ but till then they can never be put in any com-
 “ petition. Municipal law is a rule of civil con-
 “ duct. This distinguishes municipal law from
 “ the natural, or revealed ; the former of which is
 “ the rule of moral conduct, and the latter not
 “ only the rule of moral conduct, but also the
 “ rule of faith.”*

* See *Commen. on the Laws of England*. Sect. 2. p. 42.
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These periods seem to have slipped from the pen. The Scriptures are the Revelation of divine or supernatural truths, but of the "original law of nature" they are only the revival, or republication. THEY plainly declare that to be the will of God which, in *the times of ignorance* and corruption, might rather be said to have been obtruded upon the world, than recommended to it, as the will of God, by the philosophers; *they* teach that by authority which, before, reason only dictated, or opinion espoused; so that now every species of immorality is totally without excuse. Properly speaking, it is not the Divine Will, but the Divine Nature, "which was" hid from the wisdom of "ages." For though we have in Scripture only the *sure word* of morality, yet *Socrates*, *Plato*, and *Tully*, as far as they taught truly, taught the morality of Scripture. In a word, Revelation is necessarily the rule of conduct, but directly and immediately the rule of faith.

The passages just cited interfered with the argument before me; and I am happy in the opportunity hereby given me to acknowledge my obligations to a learned and sincere friend, and to testify my high respect for the name and memory of Sir W. BLACKSTONE.

Page 144. (*w*) *earnestly inculcated.*] See GROTIUS. l. 4. 12. TULL. *de Nat. Deo.* l. 2—25. *De Leg.* l. 2. 11. *De Off.* l. 2—3. PERS. *Sat.* 2. v. 69. XENOPHON. *Memo.* l. 1. p. 571. POTTER'S *Greek Antiq.* Vol. I.

B. 2.

B. 2. ch. 5. PLATO's *Alci. and* PLUTARCH's *Instit. Lacon.* CICERO *pro domo sua, apud Pontif.* TULL. *de Leg. l. 2—7. De Divinat. 1—51—57. Fragmen. Vet. Poet. p. 60.* TULL. *de Nat. Deo. l. 3—35.* ÆSCHYLUS's *Perfæ. v. 293.* EURIPIDES's *Hecuba. v. 954. Bacchæ. v. 70.* SOPHOCLES's *Ajax. v. 118 et seq.* ÆSCHYLUS's *Prom. Vinc. v. 1073.* EURIP. *Orest. v. 821. Phœniss. v. 1206. Androm. 851. Tusc. Quæst. l. 2. v. 21. Fragmen. Vet. Poet. p. 24, 96. &c, &c, &c.* See particularly the works of *Epictetus* and *M. Antoninus*. It has been indeed, and is often alledged, that both these authors borrowed, or rather stole the best of their philosophy from the documents of Christianity. But, admitting the truth of the allegation, they adopted these principles as fit and right, and as perfectly agreeable to human reason; which is quite enough for our purpose. It is not at all material to know, whether, or how far, these, or any other philosophers, were really indebted to Revelation.

Many writers, with a laudable desire to extol Christianity, have represented in a very strong light the imperfection and insufficiency of heathen Morals, and drawn at full length, and in the most lively colours, the errors and impurities of Paganism; but all this in manifest consistence with what has been advanced.

See particularly LOWTH's Direct. for reading the Scrip.

Scrip. Ch. 8. p. 129. 10. p. 183, &c. and WHITBY'S *Endeavour.* p. 10.

Page 155. (*) *the Greek Dramatists.* The true God must ultimately be understood by the *πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε* &c. of *Homer*; the *Divum Pater*, &c. of *Virgil*; the *Summus Deorum* of *Ovid*; the *communis conditor* of *Juvenal*; and by him, as *Horace* says,

Unde nil majus generatur ipso;

Nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum.

Nævius, according to *Varro*, calls *Jupiter Patrem Optimum, Supremum, et Summum*. 'Ο ἐπὶ πάντι—*be above all*, is *Porphry's* description of the Deity. *Prometheus*, in *Æschylus*, calls *Jupiter*, though insolently and in defiance, *τον κρατύντ' αἰ.* v. 936. And in the *Supplices* of the same author he is styled *αἰώνιος κρείων ἀπαύστῃς*; which are almost *Isaiab's* own words according to *Bp. Lowth's* translation. q. v. v. 584. See *Isaiab* 9. 6. There is a fine passage in the *Antigone* of *Sophocles* which represents *Jupiter* as neither *slumbering nor sleeping*,* and as subject to no infirmity, or decay. See v. 612. *et seq.* The sovereign independence of the Deity, the unsearchableness of his counsels, and the stability of his decrees, are strongly expressed in the following places. See *Homer. Il. l. 1. v. 5.* *Æschylus's Supplices. v. 1056. 600. Prome. Vinct. v. 50. Agamem. v. 1496.*

* Psalm 121. v. 3, 4.

The *Cōain* in *Hemer*, II. 8. v. 19. &c, has been remarked on by many writers; and the subserviency of all things, past, present, and to come, to the Divine will and pleasure, is expressly declared in the continuation of the passage above referred to in *Sophocles* :

Το, τ' ἐπειτα, καὶ τὸ μέλλων,

Καὶ τὸ πρὶν ἐπαρχεῖα. *Vid. sup.*

The spirituality of the Divine Being is expressed by *Plato*, *Anaxagoras*, *Aristotle*, and others, under the term *υἱς*; by *Cicero*, and the Latin writers, by that of *Mens*. The *divinæ particula curæ* of *Horace*, the *ætherius sensus* of *Virgil*, the *animus* as contradistinguished from the *anima* of *Juvenal*, &c, &c, unquestionably refer us to the spiritual creator. *Tully*, we know, delights in this argument, and handles it in a thousand places. In one particularly, he asserts, “*Nihil ab optimo et præstantissimo genitore, animo melius procreatum;*” and in another, he speaks the very language of Revelation itself. “*DEI*, says he, *IMAGO quædam* “*ANIMUS est; ex ipso DEO delibata ac profecta.*” †

The omniscience, the omnipresence, † the invisibility, and the incomprehensible nature of the Deity, are set in a very strong light by *Pagan* writers. *Tully*, in his book *de natura Deorum*, cites *Pythagoras* affirming, *Deum esse animum per naturam*

† *Timæus*. Fragmen. Sec. 8. *Consola.* sub fin.

† See *Virgil*, *Æn.* I. 6. v. 724. *Geor.* 4. v. 221.

rerum omnium commeantem. l. 1. 10. *Seneca*, speaking of God, says, *Quocunque te flexeris, ibi illum videbis occurrentem tibi*; and *Plautus* says finely, *Est profecto Deus, qui quæ nos gerimus auditque et videt.* The Greek Dramatists are very clear and explicit under these articles. In a fragment of *Euripides* one says,

Οὗτος θεῶν ὀφθαλμός τε πάντ' ἰδεῖν; which, as Mr. *Barnes* observes, is exactly parallel with *Hesiod's*,

Πάντα ἰδὼν Διὸς ὀφθαλμός, καὶ πάντα νοήσας.* Of all the heathens *Plato* perhaps had the most exalted sentiments, and, as a learned author expresses it, “came nearest to the truth,” He was indeed conversant in the *Jewish* Law to such a degree as to be described under the character of *Moses* speaking *Greek*, according to the same author’s observation from *Eusebius* and others. He calls God *Δημιουργος*, and emphatically the *το ὄν*. *Origen* cites this remarkable expression from him, which is produced by *Grotius*; Μετὰ μὲν Διὸς ἡμεῖς, ἄλλοι δὲ μετὰ ἄλλων δαιμονων.—

But, it may be, this eulogy is premature. “In the sacred commentary of the *Persian* rites, the following words, says *Sir Isaac Newton*, are ascribed to *Zoroastres*.” Ο Θεὸς ἐστὶ κεφαλὴν ἔχων ἱερακός. πρῶτος ἐστὶν ὁ πρῶτος, ἀφθάρτος, αἰδῖος, ἀγενήτος, ἀμερής, ἀνομοιοτάτος, ἡνιοχὸς πάντος καλῆ, ἀδωροδοκῆτος, ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθωτάτος, φρονιμὼν φρονιμωτάτος. ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ πατήρ

* See *Tragæd. Incer.* v. 8. and *Barnes's* Note. See *Ibid.* v. 335.

εὐνομίας καὶ δικαιοσύνης, αὐτοδιδάκτος, φυσικός, καὶ τέ-
λῃος, &c.

“ This, says he, was the antient God of the
“ *Persian Magi*.” The same great author acquaints
us, that *Hystaspes*, father of *Darius*, was co-founder
of the religion of the *Persian* empire with *Zoroas-
tres*; which religion, says he, “ was composed
“ partly of the institutions of the *Chaldeans*, in
“ which *Zoroastres* was well skilled; and partly
“ of the institutions of the antient *Brachmans*, who
“ are supposed to derive even their name from the
“ *Abrahams*, or sons of *Abraham*, born of his se-
“ cond wife *Keturah*, and instructed by their father
“ in the worship of ONE GOD, without images,
&c.” (See NEWTON’S *Chronol. Ch.* 6. p. 350, 351.)

One is almost afraid to say, this consummate
Philosopher could himself be mistaken in this or in
any matter; could possibly be liable to the weak-
ness of inadvertence, or the littleness of prepossession.
Yet the author of the *Essay on Spirit*
makes use of Sir. *Is. Newton*’s words when he de-
clares, that *God is a relative term, which has re-
ference to subjects*. Surely it has been observed with
great truth, that of all terms the term GOD is per-
haps the most absolute. It is the name of the Su-
preme, self-existent Being, independently on ten
thousand creations. We know not wherein the
essential happiness of the Deity consists; but we
know that the mere production of worlds contri-

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butes nothing to it. It is true, God is our Creator, our King, our Father, &c; but does he stand related to us under these characters by necessity, or by bounty of grace? We worship him as our Maker, we honour him as our Sovereign, we fear him as our Judge, we love him as our Father, &c, &c; but before the great day of universal manifestation we shall not *see him*, and even then most probably shall but imperfectly *see him as he is*.

Page 160. (*y*) *proof upon proof*.] The refinements of learned men have disserved the cause they wished to promote. According to the traditions of the *Chinese*, as *European* missionaries have represented them, *Confucius*, their great philosopher, who lived above five hundred years before Christ, used often to say, *It is in the West that the true Saint is to be found*; and even before him it was a saying of *Laokun*, that *eternal reason produced ONE; ONE produced TWO; TWO produced THREE; and THREE produced all things*. How far the conclusion of *Simplicius's* comment upon *Epietetus* may deserve more attention, I will not determine. It is to be found in Dr. CAVE's *Prim. Christian*. being a prayer "in which mention is made of three Persons, the *Lord*, (or Father;) the *Saviour*, (or Christ;) and the *light of truth*;" which even in Scripture, says Dr. C., is "a common periphrasis of the Holy Spirit." If we may believe *Socrates* in his *Ecclesiastical History*, (as the same author refers

refers to him,) *Ignatius* heard the angels in a vision praising the Trinity in alternate hymns, &c; which introduced alternate hymns into the Church. Mr. *Hooker* seems inclined to suspect the authority of this story; and it is certain nothing is said relative to such a vision in all the genuine epistles of this antient Father, which are seven; though in one of them, viz. that to the *Ephesians*, he talks of *Jesus Christ's being sung, and of singing to the Father by Jesus Christ*: * which makes the omission more extraordinary.

The absolute Divinity of *Jesus Christ* has, with more haste than judgment, been asserted by some from our Saviour's words to the leper, *I will; be thou clean*: and by others from his *power to forgive sins*; nothing in all this implying a self-inherent authority. Dr. *Whitby* quotes the following passage from a no less illustrious Father than *Irenæus*, with respect to the *remitting power*. "By remitting the sin, &c, he shewed who he was; for if none can remit sins but God, and yet our Lord did remit them, &c, it is manifest that he was both the *Word of God*, and the *Son of man*, receiving the power of remission from his Father, as God and Man." Surely he could *receive* this power as man only.

It is not my intention to derogate in the least from the merit of Mr. *Jones's* performance, (the

* Sect. 4.

Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity,) which upon the whole is admirable and satisfactory. His scriptural parallels are for the most part happy; and his mode of reasoning is always ingenious, and generally conclusive. Perhaps it rather fails in the application of the following text; *God was in CHRIST, reconciling the world to HIMSELF.* 2 Cor. 5. 19.

“ It is allowed on all hands, says Mr. Jones, that
 “ the *world* was reconciled by Christ Jesus to the
 “ *one, only, great and supreme God.* But, this very
 “ *same God* (for the word is but once used in the
 “ whole sentence) was *in Christ*; manifest in the
 “ flesh, and *reconciling the world to himself.* And
 “ were there no other passage of Scripture to be
 “ found, this alone is sufficient to overthrow the
 “ whole doctrine of *Arianism*; which, as far as the
 “ Scripture is concerned, depends upon this one as-
 “ sertion, that *the word GOD, in Scripture, NEVER*
 “ *signifies a complex notion of more persons than one;*
 “ *but ALWAYS means one person only, viz. either the*
 “ *person of the Father singly, or the person of the Son*
 “ *singly.* Which is absolutely false: for here it sig-
 “ nifies *both.* The text considers God as agent and
 “ patient at the same time, and upon the same oc-
 “ casion; as the *reconciler* of the world, in the *per-*
 “ *son of the Son*; and the object to whom the *re-*
 “ *conciliation was made,* in the *person of the Father*;
 “ yet there is but one word (God) to express them
 “ both

" both. So that the word God, though of the
 " *singular* number, is of a *plural* comprehension.
 " And thus I find it to have been taken by some
 " of the most eminent writers before the council
 " of Nice; *Plasmatus in initio homo per manus DEI*, id
 " est, FILII et SPIRITUS, says *Irenæus*; putting
 " the singular name of God for the *two persons* of
 " the *Son* and *Spirit*. And the same word, in the
 " language of *Origen*, (if we are allowed to take
 " the version of *Ruffinus* as genuine,) includes the
 " whole *three persons*: *igitur de DEO, id est, de*
 " *PATRE, et FILIO, et SPIRITU SANCTO*. And our
 " excellent church has used the word *God* in the
 " same comprehensive sense; as in the *Blessing*
 " after the communion service, GOD ALMIGHTY,
 " *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*"

I am afraid this is not so full an answer to the above assertion as was to be wished; and that it is not absolutely sufficient for the “overthrow of the whole doctrine of *Arianism*.” In the first place, Dr. *Clarke’s* proselytes will be apt to insist, that the whole doctrine of *Arianism* does not depend upon this one assertion; and in the next place, that, if it did, Mr. *Jones* has advanced nothing here forcible enough to overthrow it. It is true, they will say, *God was in Christ*; but in what sense? why, by his grace, his influence, and spiritual communications; as he is likewise said to be *in us*; and as Christ is said to be *in us*; and as we are said to

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be *in* God, and to be *in* Christ, by the purity of our hearts and affections. This, they will tell us, is plain simple theory, without any wanton refinement, or imaginary distinction of “agent and patient, &c.” And with regard to the authorities of *Irenæus*, *Origen*, and the *Blessing* in the Communion service, they will add, that they cannot admit either a private sentiment, or a public doctrine to be the standard of true Christianity.

As this is specious enough, it may be proper to disencumber ourselves from the weight of this same *Arian* assertion, by other considerations. *Hac non successit, alia progrediamur via.*

First then let it be observed, that though the *English* word *God* be “of the *singular* number,” yet the *Hebrew* word *Elohim*, of which it is the translation, is confessedly “of a *plural* comprehension.” Accordingly it has been demonstrated over and over again, that the ancient *Jews* held a plurality of some kind in the Deity. (*Vid. Supr.*)

But, secondly, we may recur to considerations still more internal, and indisputable. If it has been abundantly made to appear, that the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, as properly and truly as the Father is God, the term *God* must unavoidably be acknowledged to include, or to “signify a complex notion of *more persons than one*,” in many places of holy writ. It will suffice to produce

duce a few instances. The Father is said to be *in* us, 1 John. 4. 13. or to *dwell in* us, or *abide* with us, and the Son is said to be *in us*, &c, Rom. 8. v. 10. and the Holy Ghost is said to be *in us*; and, in a case which he mentions, St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, it would be reported, that *God was in them of a truth*. 1 Cor. 14. 25. Now can any man assign a tolerable reason why the word *God* in this passage should not be regarded as inclusive of the whole blessed Trinity? *Another Scripture saith, every one of us shall give account of himself to God*; Rom. 14. 12. but if in the term, *God*, Jesus Christ is not comprehended, what will become of the text which assures us *we must all appear before his judgment-seat*? 2 Cor. 5. 10. The great Apostle of the Gentiles puts the *Elders of the Church of Ephesus* in mind, that he had *not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God*: and if he who *purchased this Church with his own blood*, and he who appointed *overseers over it*, are to be considered as parties in this *counsel*, (and surely they are to be so considered,) the word, *God*, has manifestly a *complex* signification here, and *means* more than *one person only*. Acts 20. 27, 28. The *Kingdom of God* is a phrase which, in most places where it occurs, will, I presume, not barely admit but require the same latitude of application. The *Word of God* may be regarded in the same light. Lastly I shall close these examples with one which is the more eligible,

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because it is contained in a text which has already undergone examination, and to which our adversaries are for ever putting in their claim. I mean v. 28th. of the 15th. Chapter of St. Paul's first Epist. to the Cor. * *When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God,* i. e. the complement of the Deity, the Trinity in Unity, *may be all in all.* Every critical eye sees clearly that, in this passage, for the complex word—God—we must read the single term Father, before we can with any sort of propriety accommodate it to the purpose of the anti-trinitarians. In this case indeed, there would be an obvious sense, and a natural antithesis, and both in their favour.

The other text—*I am in the Father, and the Father in me,* John 14. 11., which Mr. J. produces as synonymising with the preceding, may be explained away by similar means. The *Arian* has the following passages to oppose to them. *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me,* &c. John 17. 21, 22, 23. I am far from saying, or even insinuating, that there is any real difficulty in all this; or that the orthodox construction of

* See Disc. 6. sub fin.

the

the passages adduced by Mr. J. does not fairly and properly belong to them. I only take leave to observe, and have an obvious view in observing, that, with regard to the defence of Christian doctrine in general, and particularly to the confutation of the assertion above-mentioned, this truly respectable author might have selected texts less equivocal, less liable to prevarication.

It is observable, Dr. *I. Watts* makes the texts *I am in the FATHER* and *the FATHER IN ME*, &c, subservient to his doctrine of the inherency, or *indwelling* of the Father, i. e. of the godhead in the *MAN Christ Jesus*..

It has been remarked, that by a small alteration in the punctuation, the 3d. v. of the 17th. Chap. of *St. John*, *that they might know thee the only true God*, &c, may be thus rendered, *that they might know thee, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, to be the only true God*. This reading is supported by the authorities of *Novatian*, *St. Austin*, and *St. Ambrose*. But it will be prudent, I believe, to wave these authorities. These Fathers seem to have been *in great fear, where no fear was*. We may safely abide by the sense of the text before us in its present state. Were we really in distress, it might be worth our while to appeal to these *early opinions* in our favour.

See *Discourse 6th sub. fin.* Dr. *WATTS's Last Sentiments*. p. 76, 77. See the passage in *IRENÆUS*
cited

cited at large, and illustrated by Dr. WATERLAND in his 2d Defence of his Queries. p. 90. See Mat. 9. 6. Deism Revealed. Vol. 2. p. 192. CAVE's Prim. Christian. p. 40, 177. See WHEATLY's MOYER's Lecture Sermons. Sermon 5. p. 250. Note B.

Page. 161. (*z*) *abstract speculation.*] Among the many tripartite representations of the Trinity, material and intellectual, *essence, intelligence, and will*, have been regarded by some as significant of that great mystery; which seems to be much about as wise a symbolization as that of those who gravely affirm the *moon* to be an emblem of the *Church*, *birds* emblems of *heretics*, and *fish* of *anti-christ*. “We find in our nature, says a celebrated writer, which is said to be made after the image of God, a very near resemblance of the Holy Trinity, and of the different operations of each of the Divine Persons. For example; to know a thing present, and to remember what is past, and to love or hate, are different operations of our mind, and performed by different faculties of it. Of these, the understanding is the *Father* faculty, and gives being to things, as to us; for what we know not, is to us as if it were not: this answers to creation. From this faculty proceeds the *second*, that of *memory*, which is a pre-serving of that the understanding has created to us. Then the *third* faculty, that of the will, which loves or hates, proceeds from both the
“ other;

“ other ; for we cannot love or hate what is not
 “ first created by the understanding, and preserved
 “ to us by the memory.”

The plastic power of a warm imagination, or a sanguine zeal, will form emblems and adumbrations of the Trinity in all countries, and in all ages of the world. We are told the old *Ægyptians*, and modern *Americans*, worshipped the Deity under the picture of a sun with *three heads*.

As infidelity will take all advantages of pious whim, and indiscreet attachment, so will it as surely avail itself to its utmost of certain strange notions, which have been advanced, in direct variation from the received doctrine of the primitive Church. It is not easy to say with what propriety, or in what sense, Papists have called the *Virgin* the *complement* of the Trinity. Mr. *Sale* tells us, some of the Christian *Arabs* associate with a Sect that worshipped the *Virgin* as a God. We learn from the same author, and others, that some of the *Nicene* Council maintained there were two Gods besides God the Father, *viz.* *Christ* and the *Virgin*. Others have affirmed, that the *Spirit* was the *creature* of the *Son*. The Bp. of *Agen* wrote an expostulatory letter to Father *Gabriel*, who had roundly asserted, that *Mary* was the *fourth* Person in the Godhead.

JURIEU's *Accom.* B. 3. p. 163, &c. STACKH.
Body of Div. p. 183. SALE's *Prelim. Discourse*, p. 35.

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PRID. *Life of Mahomet.* p. 36. LESLIE'S *Sb. Meth. with De.* p. 61, &c.

Page 207. (*aa*) *smatch of this sentiment.*] We are told that *Diogenes*, upon being asked, how he would be buried, answered, in cynical contempt, as it should seem, of this custom of his country, *ἐν προσώπῳ*, with my face downwards.

POTTER'S *Gr. Antiq.* V. 2. B. 4. Cb. 6.

Page 227. (*bb*) *reunited to it.*] There is no guarding against the impertinence of captiousness, or the prevarications of infidelity. Many questions may be asked upon subjects of this kind, which may perplex our judgments, without disturbing our faith. It will be sufficient to insist, that, even setting aside the authority of Scripture, or granting it to be undecisive, our theory is at least as free from difficulties as that of our opponents.

Page 231. (*cc*) *L's. notion of identity.*] In controversy it is neither unusual, nor is it bad policy to cry f—l first. Both Mr. L. and Dr. S. have recourse to something like this artifice, when they apply to believers St. Paul's severe reprimand to such enquirers as should ask, *how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?* Thou fool, the Apostle replies; and proceeds to illustrate the doctrine of the *resurrection of the body*, through the remaining part of the Chapter, and particularly in the verses some time since quoted. If this plainly appears from the fairest and most natural construction

construction of these passages, we stand clear of the aforesaid mortifying imputation, and may justly return the compliment. And, in fact, we are encouraged to risk our reputation for wisdom on *our* interpretation, by that sort of half-concession which truth seems to have extorted from Mr. L. himself, when he tells us, that the words—*that which thou sowest*, &c. might be “sufficient to deter us “from determining any thing *for* or *against* the “same body’s being raised at the last day.” For these are not St. Paul’s strongest, or most unequivocal expressions.

Page 234. (*dd*) *this body to come.*] One would almost imagine Dr. S. had espoused somewhat like the antient heathen notion, that the “shades of “departed persons retained a kind of subtile vehicle, in all particulars exactly resembling the “body of the deceased.” The notion of such a *subtile vehicle*, which is not a whit more comprehensible than the Christian theory of the resurrection, is at least so far consonant to the same, as it implies a natural wish of reunion, and a sort of *bankering* of the soul after its old companion.

GEDDES’S *Essay on Compos.* p. 212.

Page 234. (*ee*) *or to what.*] Dr. S. must have known what has been said by our most eminent Divines upon the subject before us. This Church never produced a sounder Divine, or this nation a closer reasoner than Dr. Barrow. His sentiments
are

are as clear and determinate as possible on the orthodox side of the question. Could the Inquirer persuade himself that he has confuted them by the consciousness of silence, the affectation of contempt, or the peremptoriness of opposition?

See BARROW's *Expos. of the Cr. under the Article of the Resurrec. of the Body*. p. 305.

Page 234. (ff) *would have them.*] The common arguments which are adduced in proof of the identity in question have, I presume, much more weight than some are willing to allow. The effects of chymical operations have been observed to be analogous to the resurrection. It has been remarked that "*from the ashes of a plant fairer plants have sprung.*"

Grotius pursues much the same course of arguments as others, but is unhandsomely deserted by his Editor. For Mr. *Le-clerc* is for adjusting matters nearly on the same ground, and in the same language with Dr. S. and Mr. L. RESURGERE corpus dici optime potest, cum SIMILE ex terra a Deo formatur, conjungiturque menti. Itaque non opus est ut in nimias angustias nos redigamus dum ταυτοτητα матерιæ nimis rigide defendimus.

JENKINS's *Reas. of Christ*. v. 2. p. 447. See BEATTIE on the *immutab. of Truth*, Cb. 4. p. 86, &c. GRO. de ver. l. 2. c. 10.

Page 243. (gg) *believe in him.*] Some have erred concerning this matter. Dr. *Cudworth* supposes Christ's body to have been changed into a spiritual

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or heavenly body immediately after his resurrection; the subtilty and tenuity of which was shewn by his entering into the place where his disciples were assembled when the DOORS WERE SHUT, &c.; “ however its glory were for the time suspended, “ partly for the better convincing them of the “ truth of his resurrection, and partly because they “ were not then able to bear the splendor of it.”

But there are many reasons why we should not humour this child of a fruitful imagination. When our Lord, after his conversation, &c, with the two disciples at *Emmaus*, vanished out of their sight, had he not *that* body with which he was crucified? Had he not *that* body when he *shewed* his disciples his *hands* and his *feet*; when he called upon them to *handle* him, &c, and assured them that it was he himself who addressed them? The truth is, he could appear or disappear at pleasure, by virtue of his divine power; and therefore it was by no means necessary he should be invested with a *spiritual* or heavenly body for that purpose. The resurrection of *that* body which was crucified, which *rose from the dead*, and with which Jesus Christ conversed upon earth *forty days*, is the proper pledge and earnest of *our* resurrection; his *glorious body*, strictly so called, being probably assumed at his *Ascension*.

St. Ignatius, in his epistle to the *Smyrneans*, expresses himself very emphatically upon this subject.

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In his note on the passage I allude to, the learned *Vossius* says as follows. *Resurrectionem Christi vocat (Ignatius) σωματιον quia nobis hæc data commune resurrectionis futurae signum.* The Most Rev. Translator, I observe by the way, renders *σωματιον* by the word *token*, which I need not inform the critical reader is not fully adequate to the original: the *Greek* term denoting a *token*, or *sign* given in consequence of an agreement between party and party. Our Saviour had pledged himself, both to his disciples, and to the *Jews*, to rise again; and by so doing at once fulfilled his engagements, and gave ample security for the general resurrection.

From that passage in *St. Paul's 2d. Epist. to the Cor. Ch. 5.* which speaks of our being *clothed upon with our house which is from heaven*, &c, some have inferred, says *Dr. Cudworth*, that "bodies come not out of graves:" but as this matter is cleared by commentators, and *Dr. S.* lays no stress on the place, I shall waste no time upon it.

JENKINS'S *Reason. of Christian.* v. 2. p. 447, &c.
 GROTIUS *de Verit.* l. 2. c. 10. IGNA. *to the Smyrn. Sect.*
 I. See VOSSIUS'S note p. 257. CUDWORTH'S *Intell.*
Sys. ch. 5. p. 796, 799. See WHITBY'S *Note at John*
20. v. 19.

Page 244. (*bb*) in the *flesh*.] This passage in *St. Clement* is not to be over strictly, or literally understood. The Apostle expressly declares, that *flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* That
 body

body which shall be *raised up at the last day*, that material substance which, when re-united to the soul, will constitute the identical person who died, and was buried, shall be changed, shall even be *fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ*, previously, as it should seem, to its appearance before his *judgment-seat*. For *we shall all be changed in a moment &c, at the last trump, when the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and this mortal shall put on immortality.*

It has been observed by many, that the good fathers from whom passages are extracted on this subject, together with St. Paul before them, in his *15th. Chap. of the 1st. Epif. to the Cor.*, speak only of the *resurrection of the just*: but it is at the same time to be noted, that, with respect to this principle of incorruption, the change in the general *resurrection* will undoubtedly be the same both of the *just and the unjust*.

Weak reasoning, like a weapon which falls short of its aim, will be returned upon us by our adversary. St. Chrysostom's argument, and that of some other fathers, and of many modern Divines, for the *resurrection of the same body*, drawn from the supposed absurdity of *one* body's sinning and *another's* suffering, is obviously a futile one, and may be rendered serviceable to the interest of the enemy. The body undergoes a great variety of changes in the course of life; and, it might be asked, would not every imaginable purpose of

retribution be fully answered by a future state of happiness, or misery, to soul and body, whence-
soever *that body* might be supposed to come? *Ut justum est*, says Wollebius, *ut quædam peccata post hanc vitam puniantur; ita est quoque, ut quod socium fuit peccatorum sit quoque pœnarum.*

Compend. Cbrist. Theol. p. 193.

Page 251. (ii) *be once bad.*] “How far, says “Dr. S., they (*Athenag. &c.*) succeeded is not the “point at present; they might have shewn that the “*resurrection of the flesh* is no where taught in Scrip-
“ture.” But what if this was left to be shewn by Dr. Sykes? What, if their design was to prove the *resurrection of the flesh* to be a Scripture doctrine, and that upon rational grounds? I venture to think this is put out of doubt by what has been submitted to the reader; though luckily Dr. S. himself will help us out if we have any how failed in our argumentation upon this subject. For in his account of *Tertullian’s third form, or rule of faith*, in his book *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, the Dr. thus expresses himself. “Nor is his *third Form* “or *Rule*, &c, any *Creed* of any Church, but only “a summary of the doctrines of the Gospel.” This father then intended his *Form* or *Rule*, as a summary of Christian doctrine, even according to Dr. S’s account of the matter; and in *it*, as it is quoted by *himself*, we have mention in plain terms of the *resurrection of the flesh*. The words of *Ter-*
tullian

tullian are these: that Christ shall come in glory to judge the world, *facta utriusque partis resurrectione, cum carnis restitutione.* *

Page 254. (*kk*) *the first time.*] Notwithstanding the explicitness of these passages, *Mahomet's* theory of the *resurrection* is sometimes not a little whimsical, according to what we learn from Mr. *Sale* of it. He acquaints us, that this false prophet supposed the whole human body would be corrupted, except the *rump-bone*, which is first formed, (the *os coccygis*, as he terms it;) and that this is to be a sort of seed from whence the whole will be renewed at the last day, after a rain of forty days, (*viz.* a great dew, according to the *Jews*, from whom *Mahomet* took this hint,) which will impregnate the earth, and "cause the bodies to sprout like plants." The *Jews*, it seems, call this bone *Luz*. *Cudworth* appears to have an eye to this particular in his 5th Chapter. p. 799.

SALE's Prelim. Disc. p. 81.

Page 254. (*ll*) *been discussing.*] The story which *Mahomet* introduces into the second book of the *Koran* of the miracle God was pleased to work, for the confirmation of *Abraham's* faith in the article before us, is extraordinary indeed, and well worth transcribing. *God said to Abraham, take four birds, cut them in pieces, and disperse them in four different mountains; and then call them, and you shall see all*

* Enquiry. p. 17.

those four birds will immediately come to you. This story is told by *Mahometan* writers still more circumstantially. "These four birds, they say, were " a pigeon, a cock, a crow, and a peacock ; and " that when *Abraham* had cut them in pieces, he " made a perfect anatomy of them, and minced " them all together. Some add, that he pounded " them in a mortar, and reduced them all to one " mass, which he divided into four parts, and carried them to the top of four several mountains ; " and that then, holding up their heads, which he " retained in his hands, he called them severally " by their names ; and that each came accordingly " for his head, and flew away with it." *

It is certain *Mahomet* refined much upon the history of *Moses* in general ; and my author observes, that probably this wild story has its foundation in God's command to *Abraham* to offer a sacrifice of a *turtle-dove*, and a *pigeon*, among other animals, as we read in the 15th Chapter of *Gen. v. 9. et seq.*

Page 257. (*mm*) in competent authority.] The sense of the Apostolical and primitive Church may be collected from the Form of the first *Baptismal Creed*, which ran in the following terms, *I believe in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* ‡ That

* MORGAN'S *Mahom. explained.* Vol. 1. p. 156. See Mr. WHITES's Note at l. 14. p. 274. of his learned B. Lectures.

‡ See CYPRIAN. *Epist.* 73.

this

this Creed, which implicitly declares the *Three* Persons to be *One* God, was simply the Confession used in the earliest times, is the opinion of many learned men, and particularly of *Episcopus*, (the most eminent of the *Remonstrants* in *Holland*,) who, as *Dr. Waterland* observes, was not aware of its destructive consequence to his own Hypothesis, viz. "that the divine eternal generation of the " Son was not inserted in the Creeds from the beginning." The words of *Episcopus*, as quoted by *Bp. Bull*, are these. *Antiquissimum (symbolum), quodque in prima Baptismi administratione jam inde ab ipsis Apostolorum temporibus usitabatur, hoc erat; Credo in Deum Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum: nempe ad præscriptam ab ipso Jesu formulam.* On which occasion the learned prelate makes the following observations. *Perspicuum est in hac formula vocem DEUM απο κοινῆς ad omnes Tres, nempe Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum referri. Quod Græci adhuc clarius exprimunt. ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ, ΤΟΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΑ, ΤΟΝ ΥΙΟΝ, ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ. Ita sane hanc brevem Confessionem veteres intellexere. Hinc Tertullianus (adv. Prax. c. xiii.) communem Christianorum de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto Fidem exponens, ait, et Pater Deus, et Filius Deus, et Spiritus Sanctus Deus, et Deus unusquisque. Mibi sane videtur in his paucis verbis, Credo in Deum, &c, magnam illam veritatem, nempe Filium et Spiritum Sanctum UNUM esse cum Patre Deum, aliquatenus clarius*

exprimi quam in fufioribus quibusdam symbolis quæ subfecuta funt. Nam per additamenta illa poft verba Credo in Deum Patrem, &c, et adjectiones poft mentionem Filii, non repetita voce DEUM in articulis de Filio et Spiritu Sancto, videri potuit, et nonnullis visa eft DEI appellatio ad solum Patrem pertinere; plane contra mentem ac sententiam eorum qui latiora illa fymbola condiderunt.

BULL's *Judic. Ecclef. Cath. Chap. 4. p. 308, 309.*
 WALL's *Hift. of Inf. Bap. Part 2. Ch. 9. p. 491.*
 BINGHAM's *Antiq. B. 2. WATERLAND's Import. of the Doc. of the Trin. Ch. 6. p. 223. and Serm. 8.*
 RANDOLPH's *Vindica. Part 2. p. 81.*

Page 258. (nn) *no religion at all.*] As nothing differs more than judgment, fo by consequence nothing multiplies more than error. The number of heresies and heretics, according to *Prateolus*, was in his time no less than 520, as *Bp. Taylor* informs us, in his discourse on the *Liberty of Prophefying*. But he takes no small pains at the same time to lessen their number, and extenuate their malignity; and, it must be granted, not without success. It concerns not me to enter into particulars, or to examine the grounds of this learned prelate's moderation. The list of heretics, including those of a modern date, as it is given us by *A. Ross*, in his *View of all the Religions in the World*, is almost as numerous as the abovementioned. The very names of the greatest part of them must be to the generality

rality of readers unknown. He gives us an account of the *Secundians*, *Ptolomeans*, *Colarbasti*, *Heracleonites*, *Ophites*, *Cainites*, *Cataphrygians*, *Theodocians*, *Semiarrians*, *Aquarii*, *Floriani*, *Æternales*, *Luciferians*, *Humiliarii*, *Cruciferi*, *Hospitalarii*, *Bethlemites*, &c, &c, &c.*

Of a few of the old heresies, which were to a remarkable degree extravagant, it may not be amiss to mention the tenets. *Irenæus* in cap. 28. l. 2. adv. *Hæreses*. censures such heretics, *quicumque inerrabilem τὴν λόγον generationem enarrare ausi sint ex trivio petitis comparationibus, dicentes scilicet, VERBUM DEI ex Patre generari, ad instar VERBI HOMINIS per linguam prolati*; which are Bp. *Bull*'s words.

The *Valentinians* taught, that Christ's body was in a manner purely spiritual, and passed through the Virgin as through a pipe, or conduit.

The *Cainites* worshipped *Cain* as the author of much good to mankind; as also *Esau*, *Corab*, *Dathan*, &c, &c; and *Judas*, asserting that he foreknew what happiness should accrue to mankind by Christ's death, and therefore betrayed him.

It was the doctrine of *Apelles*, that there was but one chief God, to whom was subordinate a fiery

* A. Ross was a *Scotchman*, and Chaplain to *Charles I.* He was the author, or compiler of near thirty treatises, the subjects of some of which are not uninteresting. His *View of all Religions* past several editions; the last of which appeared in 1696. It is referred to by Mr. *BOYLE* in his *Discourse on the usefulness of Natural and Experimental Philosophy*.

See *GREY'S HUDIBRAS*. Canto. 2. v. 2.

God, who appeared to *Moses in the bush*, who made the world, gave the law, and was the God of *Israel*. He gave to Christ a body compacted of the starry and elementary substance, which appeared in the shape only of man. This body, when he ascended, he left behind him, every part thereof returning to their former principles : Christ's spirit only being in heaven. This heretic lived, says *A. Rofs*, about 150 years after Christ, in the reign of the Emperor *Commodus*.

We have already exhibited to the reader many strange Pagan notions relative to the nature, &c, of the Deity ; but perhaps the most extraordinary, the most eccentric of them all, has not yet been remembered. It is not properly a heresy indeed, but it is an error which may fitly occupy this place. The heathen mystical theologists often call God *αρρενοθηλυν*—*male and female*, signifying thereby, though grossly, yet not unemphatically, the *creative* power of the Supreme Being. Dr. *Cudworth* cites a passage from a hymn of *Synesius*, (whom he calls a *learned and pious Bishop*,) wherein the Almighty is addressed under expressions precisely equivalent :—

Συ πατηρ, Συ ματηρ,
Συ δ' αρρεν, Συ δε θηλυς.

Agreeably hereunto, *Varro* quotes from *Soranus*, an eminent poet, (according to our author,) the verses following :

Jupiter

Jupiter omnipotens, regum rex ipse Deûmque.

Progenitor genitrixque Deûm; Deus unus et omnis.

Methinks this sentiment becomes the heathen theologist, or poet, much better than the Christian Divine.

Far from meaning to rank a late very eminent writer, Dr. *I. Watts*, in the number of notorious heretics, or in the least to detract from the excellence of his character, I think myself bound in duty to my subject to take notice here of the singularity of his sentiments. "His idea of the Divinity of Christ was, that *the Godhead, the Deity itself, personally distinguished as the FATHER, was united to the man Christ Jesus, in consequence of which union, or indwelling of the Godhead, he became properly God.** He conceived this union to have subsisted before the Saviour's appearance in the flesh, and that *the human soul of Christ existed with the Father from before the foundation of the world*; on which ground he maintains the real descent of Christ from heaven to earth, &c."

In these sentiments there is not so much as a reference to the Holy Ghost. But we are not to consider them as final. We shall find the Dr. to have had more enlarged notions respecting the doctrine of the Trinity.

* It seems these were likewise Dr. DODDERIDGE's sentiments.

In

In his SOLEMN ADDRESS TO THE GREAT AND EVER-BLESSED GOD, on a review of what he *had written in the Trinitarian Controversy*, he puts the following questions with all that *humble reverence*, (his own words,) and that *holy awe* WHICH *becomes a creature in the presence of his God*.

“Hast thou not, O Lord God Almighty, hast
 “thou not transacted thy divine and important af-
 “fairs among men by thy Son *Jesus Christ*, and by
 “thy holy Spirit? And hast thou not ordained
 “that men should transact their highest and most
 “momentous concerns with thee, by thy Son, and
 “and by thy Spirit? Hast thou not, by the mouth
 “of thy Son *Jesus*, required all that profess his
 “religion to be washed with water in the name of
 “the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost? Is
 “it not my duty then to enquire, who or what
 “are these sacred names, and what they signify?

“Hast thou not ascribed divine names, and
 “titles, and characters to thy Son and thy holy
 “Spirit in thy word, as well as assumed them to
 “thyself? And hast thou not appointed to them
 “such glorious offices as cannot be executed with-
 “out something of divinity or true Godhead in
 “them? And yet art not thou, and thou alone the
 “true God? How shall a poor weak creature be
 “able to adjust and reconcile these clashing ideas,
 “and to understand this mystery? Or must I be-
 “lieve and act blindfold, without understanding?

“Holy

“ Holy Father, (he proceeds,) thou knowest,
 “ how firmly I believe with all my soul, whatso-
 “ ever thou hast plainly written and revealed in
 “ thy word. I believe Thee to be the only true
 “ God, the supreme of beings, self-sufficient for
 “ thine own existence, and for all thy infinite af-
 “ fairs and transactions among creatures. I believe
 “ thy only Son *Jesus Christ* to be all-sufficient for
 “ the glorious work of mediation between God
 “ and man, to which thou hast appointed him. I
 “ believe he is a man, in whom dwells all the ful-
 “ ness of the Godhead bodily. I believe he is one
 “ with God; he is God manifested in the flesh;
 “ and that the man *Jesus* is so closely and insepa-
 “ rably united with the true and eternal Godhead,
 “ as to become one person, even as the soul and
 “ body make one man.

“ I believe also thy blessed Spirit hath almighty
 “ power and influence to do all thy will, to instruct
 “ men effectually in divine truths, &c. I yield up
 “ myself joyfully and thankfully to this method of
 “ thy salvation, as it is revealed in thy gospel. But
 “ I acknowledge my darkness still. I want to have
 “ this wonderful doctrine of the all-sufficiency of
 “ thy Son and Spirit for these divine works made
 “ a little plainer.

“ Hadst thou informed me, gracious Father, in
 “ any place of thy word, that this divine doctrine
 “ is not to be understood by men, and yet they
 “ were

“ were required to believe it, I would have sub-
 “ dued all my curiosity to faith, &c. But I can-
 “ not find thou hast any where forbid me to under-
 “ stand it, or to make these enquiries. My con-
 “ science is the best natural light thou hast put
 “ within me, and since thou hast given me the
 “ Scriptures, my own conscience bids me search the
 “ Scriptures to find out truth, &c. I have, there-
 “ fore, been long searching into this divine doc-
 “ trine, that I may pay thee due honour with un-
 “ derstanding. Surely I ought to know the God
 “ whom I worship, whether he be one pure and
 “ simple being, or whether thou art a threefold
 “ deity, consisting of the Father, the Son, and
 “ the Holy Spirit.

“ Dear and blessed God, hadst thou been pleased,
 “ in any one plain Scripture, to have informed me
 “ which of the different opinions about the Holy
 “ Trinity, among the contending parties of Chris-
 “ tians, had been true, thou knowest with how
 “ much zeal, satisfaction, and joy, my unbiaſſed
 “ heart would have opened itself to receive and
 “ embrace the discovery. Hadst thou told me
 “ plainly in any single text, that the Father, Son,
 “ and Holy Spirit are three real distinct persons in
 “ thy divine nature, I had never suffered myself to
 “ be bewildered in so many doubts, nor embar-
 “ rassed with so many strong fears of assenting to
 “ the mere inventions of men, instead of divine
 “ doctrine

“ doctrine ; but I should have humbly and imme-
 “ diately accepted thy words, so far as it was pos-
 “ sible for me to understand them, as the only rule
 “ of my faith. Or hadst thou been pleased so to
 “ express and include this proposition in the several
 “ scattered parts of thy book, from whence my
 “ reason and conscience might with ease find out,
 “ and with certainty infer this doctrine, I should
 “ have joyfully employed all my reasoning powers,
 “ with their utmost skill and activity, to have found
 “ out this inference, and ingrafted it into my soul.

“ Thou hast called the poor and the ignorant,
 “ the mean and foolish things of this world, to the
 “ knowledge of thyself and thy Son, and taught
 “ them to receive and partake of the Salvation
 “ which thou hast provided. But how can such
 “ weak creatures ever take in so strange, so diffi-
 “ cult, and so abstruse a doctrine as this ; in the
 “ explication and defence whereof, multitudes of
 “ men, even men of learning and piety, have lost
 “ themselves in infinite subtilties of dispute, and
 “ endless mazes of darkness ? And can this strange
 “ and perplexing notion of three real persons going
 “ to make up one true God, be so necessary and
 “ so important a part of that Christian doctrine,
 “ which, in the old Testament and the new, is
 “ represented as so plain and so easy, even to the
 “ meanest understandings ?

“ O thou searcher of hearts who knowest all
 “ things,

“ things, I appeal to thee concerning the sincerity
 “ of my enquiries into these discoveries of thy
 “ word.

“ I humbly call thee to witness, O my God,
 “ what a holy jealousy I ever wear about my heart,
 “ lest I should do the slightest dishonour to thy
 “ supreme Majesty in any of my enquiries or de-
 “ terminations. Thou seest what a religious fear,
 “ and what a tender sollicitude I maintain on my
 “ soul, lest I should think or speak any thing to di-
 “ minish the grandeurs and honours of thy Son
 “ *Jesus*, my dear Mediator, &c. Thou knowest
 “ how much I am afraid of speaking one word
 “ which may be construed into a neglect of thy
 “ blessed Spirit, from whom I hope I am daily
 “ receiving happy influences of light and strength.
 “ Guard all the motions of my mind, O Almighty
 “ God, against every thing that borders upon these
 “ dangers. Forbid my thoughts to indulge, and
 “ forbid my pen to write one word, that should
 “ sink those grand ideas which belong to thyself,
 “ or thy Son, or thy Holy Spirit. Forbid it, O my
 “ God, that ever I should be so unhappy as to un-
 “ glorify my Father, my Saviour, or my Sanctifier,
 “ in any of my sentiments or expressions concern-
 “ ing them.

“ Blessed and faithful God, hast thou not pro-
 “ mised that the meek thou wilt guide in judgment,
 “ the meek thou wilt teach thy way? Hath not
 “ thy

“ thy Son, our Saviour, assured us, that our heavenly Father will give his holy Spirit to them who ask him ? And is he not appointed to guide us into all truth ? Have I not sought the gracious guidance of thy good Spirit continually ? Am I not truly sensible of my own darkness and weakness, my dangerous prejudices on every side, and my utter insufficiency for my own conduct ? Wilt thou leave such a poor creature bewildered among a thousand perplexities, which are raised by the various opinions and contrivances of men to explain thy divine truth ?

“ Help me, heavenly Father, for I am quite tired and weary of these human explainings so various and uncertain. When wilt thou explain it to me thyself, O my God, by the secret and certain dictates of thy Spirit, according to the intimations of thy word ?”

Now, for truth's sake, I desire to ask any intelligent, impartial, and candid reader, whether we have not in these passages strong indications of a wavering, though pious mind ? Whether such language as this does not rather tend to encourage specious scepticism, than sound faith ? Whether it is not chargeable with inconsistency between reverence and remonstrance, between declarations of acquiescence and expostulations of discontent ? Whether, according to Dr. *W—*'s ideas, all ecclesiastical authority is not as such altogether odious, or contemptible ;

tible; and whether, for what appears to the contrary from these periods, Christianity might not flourish without the existence of Church, pastor, or teacher? Whether we have not in this illustrious Dissenter an extraordinary instance of the compatibility of radical and invincible prejudice with an *honest and good heart*, and a solid understanding? Whether Dr. W. had any thing like sufficient grounds for his suspicion that the orthodox received doctrines are resolvable into mere “explainings, inventions, or contrivances of men?” Whether he does not appear to be unreasonably, though sincerely anxious to *understand all mysteries*, while at the same time he could not but know, that the capital doctrines of the Gospel are delivered as mysterious, and that Christians are supposed and required to *walk by faith, and not by sight*? Whether he does not most erroneously convert a *particular* promise into a *general* one; not recollecting that, though, for obvious and very important purposes, our *heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, yet that Spirit was by no means “appointed” to *guide every individual Christian into all spiritual truth*? Whether, had we been told “plainly;” in so many words, “in any single text, that the Father, Son, and holy Spirit are three real and distinct persons in the divine nature,” it had been possible for D. W. to have misunderstood it; or whether he, or any body else, could have been

been "bewildered in any doubts," with respect to this doctrine? Whether such a "discovery" of it would not have been received every where with "unbiaſſed hearts," and with univerſal "zeal, faction and joy," a few inſtances perhaps of obduracy, &c, excepted? Whether, had it been "ſo expreſſed and included in the ſeveral ſcattered "parts" of Scripture, that the Doctör's "reaſon and conſcience could with eaſe have found it out, "and with certainty inferred it," there would have been the leaſt occaſion for the "ſkill and activity of his rational powers?" Whether, after all, the doctrine in queſtion be not expreſſed, or included in the ſacred pages ſufficiently to warrant any man's firm aſſent to it; eſpecially when we take into the account the whole weight of that evidence by which we prove its correſpondency with the ſenſe of antiquity, and the belief of the primitive Church? Whether the wiſeſt and the weakeſt are not equally incapable of "taking in ſo difficult, and ſo abſtruſe a doctrine" as that of the Trinity? Whether the Chriſtian doctrine concerning things ſpiritual and myſterious is really "repreſented," either in the Old Teſtament or the New, as "plain "and eaſy even to the meaneſt underſtanding?" Whether, granting that "multitudes even of men "of learning and piety have loſt themſelves in in- "finite ſubtilties of diſpute, &c, in the explication and defence" of the doctrine before us, all

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this should not be principally attributed to anti-trinitarian artifice, and to a gradual departure from that simplicity in which it was originally taught and received in the world? Whether, if this “perplexing notion of three real persons going to make up one true God” be a part of Christian doctrine, it is not *prima facie* the most “necessary and the most important?” Finally, whether the doctrine of the Trinity, as held in the Church, has not at least as much countenance from Scripture, and even from reason, as Dr. W—’s notion of the *indwelling of the Deity in the Man Christ Jesus*; and whether this is not in effect acknowledged by himself?

As to the notion itself, it is, I trust, to all intents and purposes refuted in the foregoing pages; and I shall content myself with expressing my astonishment at the force of prejudice in one who so strongly recommends, or more properly inculcates an “indifference for every thing but truth,”* and censures so severely all domestic, national, or party attachments. For with all his gentleness, benevolence, charity, and love of truth, Dr. W. appears to me to have been biased by more than ordinary prepossessions. He who has expressed himself in the manner we have seen; he who has occasionally declared, that he “allowed the greatest distinction possible between the sacred three in the divine nature, which does not arise to three distinct conscious

* See Improvement of the Mind. p. 285.

“minds

“minds or spirits;” and that he was fully “established in the belief of the *Deity of the blessed Three*, though he knew not the *manner of explanation*,” must, to my apprehension, be considered as protesting against the doctrine of a Trinity of *Persons*, chiefly because it was an established one; because it was the doctrine of the Church.

I have dwelt the longer on this case as it is uncommon; as it is the case of a great and good man, whom (to borrow Dr. *Johnson's* words) “every Christian Church would rejoice to have adopted.”

Dr. WATT's *last Sentiments on the Trinity*. p. 62. *Solemn Address*. p. 101, &c. See JOHNSON'S *Life of Dr. WATTS with notes*, &c. CUDWORTH'S *Intell. Syst. Ch.* 4. p. 304. A. ROSS'S *View of all Religions*. Sect. 7.

P. 260. (eo) to judge for ourselves.] It abundantly appears by a considerable number of extracts made by Bp. *Jewel* from many fathers and doctors of the Church of *Rome*, that antiently in that communion the Holy Scriptures were not barely indulged, but recommended to every hand. By what means the *Romanists* have since qualified the sense of these passages, or reconciled the same with principles of a later date, I have no occasion to inquire. But in one of them there is a singularity which, I believe, will pay any man for his trouble in the reading. It is to be found in *Theodoret*; and is translated by the

great prelate as follows. "Ye may commonly see,
 " that our doctrine is known, not only of them
 " that are the doctors of the Church, and the mas-
 " ters of the people, but also even of the *tailors*,
 " and *smitbs*, and *weavers*, and of all artificers :
 " yea, and farther also of *women* ; and that not
 " only of them that be learned, but also of *labour-*
 " *ing women*, and *sempsters*, and *servants*, and *band-*
 " *maids*. Neither only the *citizens*, but also the
 " *country-folks* do very well understand the same.
 " Ye may find, yea, even the very *ditchers*, and
 " *delvers*, and *cow-berds*, and *gardeners* disputing of
 " the HOLY-TRINITY, and of the CREATION OF
 " ALL THINGS."

The same passage is referred to by Dr. POTTER in his *Answer to Charity Mistaken*. p. 205.

JEWEL's *Defence*, &c. *part. 5. p. 507.*

Page 262. (*pp*) *mistaken in that judgment.*] An eminent and learned writer of the last century, whom I have quoted before, observes, (and the observation has been also cited,) that "heresy is not
 " an error of the understanding, but of the will ;"
 and to this doctrine, properly stated, we can readily subscribe. But in the excess of his moderation, this Right Rev. author sometimes questions, in effect at least, the authority, not only of all ecclesiastical traditions, and councils, but of the Scripture itself; giving us sentiments wholly incongruous with every idea of faith, system, or establishment.

ment. Witness *those* contained in the following extract, which, to my imagination, nothing but the zeal of adherency to a favourite principle could have drawn from the pen of so able a writer, and so professed a casuist.

“ Since, says he, holy Scripture is the repository
 “ of divine truths, and the great rule of faith, to
 “ which all sects of Christians do appeal for pro-
 “ bation of their several opinions, and since all
 “ agree in the articles of the Creed as things clearly
 “ and plainly set down, and as containing all that
 “ which is of simple and prime necessity; and since
 “ on the other side there are in Scripture many
 “ other mysteries, and matters of question upon
 “ which there is a vail; since there are so many
 “ copies with infinite varieties of reading; since a
 “ various interpunction, a parenthesis, a letter, an
 “ accent may much alter the sense; since some
 “ places have divers literal senses, many have spi-
 “ ritual, mystical, and allegorical meanings; since
 “ there are so many tropes, metonymies, ironies,
 “ hyperboles, proprieties and improprieties of lan-
 “ guage, whose understanding depends upon such
 “ circumstances that it is almost impossible to know
 “ its proper interpretation, now that the know-
 “ lege of such circumstances and particular stories is
 “ irrecoverably lost; since there are some mysteries
 “ which, at the best advantage of expression, are not
 “ easy to be apprehended, and whose explication,

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“ by reason of our imperfections, must needs be
 “ dark, sometimes weak, sometimes unintelligible;
 “ and lastly, since those ordinary means of ex-
 “ pounding Scripture, as searching the originals,
 “ conference of places, parity of reason, and ana-
 “ logy of faith, are all dubious, uncertain, and
 “ very fallible, he that is the wisest and by conse-
 “ quence the likeliest to expound truest in all pro-
 “ bability of reason, will be very far from confi-
 “ dence, because every one of these and many
 “ more are like so many degrees of improbability
 “ and uncertainty, all depressing our certainty of
 “ finding out truth in such mysteries, and amidst
 “ so many difficulties. And therefore a wise man
 “ that considers this, would not willingly be pre-
 “ scribed to by others; and therefore if he also be
 “ a just man, he will not impose upon others; for
 “ it is best every man should be left in that liberty
 “ from which no man can justly take him, unless
 “ he could secure him from error. So that here
 “ also there is a necessity to conserve the liberty of
 “ prophesying, and interpreting Scripture; a ne-
 “ cessity derived from the consideration of the dif-
 “ ficulty of Scripture in questions controverted,
 “ and the uncertainty of any internal medium of
 “ interpretation.”

Now if this be the case, we are but mocked,
 when we are told the Scriptures are the “ repository
 of divine truths;” or that *any* articles of faith
can

can be "clearly and plainly set down" in any Creed whatsoever. Under the above circumstances, in what formulary, or system, shall we look for "all that which is of simple and prime necessity?" Is it not strange too, that there should be *many other mysteries* in Scripture distinct from those *divine truths* of which it is the repository; and stranger still, that matters of *question* should be put under a *vail*? Upon all matters of *faith* there is indeed a veil; I mean, upon all mysterious matters, which cannot possibly be "apprehended at the best advantage of expression." The explication of *these* is absolutely impracticable; and every attempt for that purpose, "by reason of our imperfections, must needs be dark, sometimes weak, sometimes unintelligible." Perhaps he will bid as fair as any man to be an expounder of mysteries who shall disentangle the several clauses of this paragraph. I know not whether any thing can be found surpassing this, either in the style, or in the spirit of present moderation.*

The truth of the matter is, that very sensible and very good men, are apt to run into inconsistencies upon this subject. "It is very meet, says Dr. Potter in his answer to *Char. Mistaken*, that the ignorant people should *obey their overseers in the Lord*,

* See a curious vindication of this author, (Bp. TALYOR,) in Wood's *Ath. Oxoni.* p. 402. Vol. 2.

“ *and submit themselves to the ministry and direction of*
 “ *the Church in many profound doctrines above their*
 “ *reach. But it behoves them, (says he, in the im-*
 “ *mediately following sentence,) to have a distinct*
 “ *and comfortable knowledge of the essential points*
 “ *of faith; and not securely to rest in a babish sim-*
 “ *plicity, but (so far as God hath enabled them)*
 “ *to be led on to perfection. To which purpose*
 “ *they are commanded to search the Scriptures, that*
 “ *they may grow and increase in knowledge, &c, and*
 “ *that they may be able both to believe with the heart,*
 “ *and confess with their mouth, and render a reason*
 “ *of that hope that is in them.*”

Bp. TAYLOR's *Disc. on the Lib. of Pro. Sect. 2.*
No. 6. Char. Mistaken answered. Sect. 6. p. 203.

Page 270. (qq) *freedom of sentiment.*] The humour of raising doubts and disputes, opposing establishments, and disdaining to think or act in the common way is, as Bp. Gibson observes, well expressed by one of the advocates for infidelity, in words to the following effect; that *if the opinions of a certain friend of his were established to day, he would oppose them to morrow.* This, the Bp. informs us, is reported to have been said by a person (I suppose) of some consequence, whose name he mentions not.

Bp. GIBSON's *Past. Let. p. 7, 8.*

Page 271. (rr) *spiritual Constitution.*] The author of a work published some years since under the

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the title of *Free Thoughts on the Subject of a farther Reformation*, speaks of our Reformers in the following terms. “ One no small disadvantage which
 “ they unhappily laboured under, and which from
 “ their time to this has been matter of just regret
 “ to true friends of *Divine Revelation*, was their
 “ *defect* of knowledge in sacred matters, above all
 “ in the *true sense of Scripture*, &c. If (says he
 “ in another place) we would form our judgments
 “ of the abilities of our Reformers to frame for us
 “ a system of doctrines which should remain a per-
 “ petual standard of belief and profession in the
 “ *English Church*, and by which all our Clergy in
 “ all future ages should be summarily concluded,
 “ we shall, I suppose, see just reason to wish that
 “ they had been more equal than they appear to be,
 “ to so weighty an undertaking. Those who are
 “ well acquainted with their writings will see, in a
 “ variety of instances, evident marks of their insuf-
 “ ficiency for such a task ; and be fully convinced
 “ of the truth of that observation of a learned and
 “ worthy Doctor of our Church, that they were but
 “ *bad interpreters* of the Scriptures.” .

In support of all this derogation, which is oblig-
 ingly qualified with a few introductory common-
 place compliments, our author has given us a
 number of extracts, relative to certain religious
 topics, from Arch-Bishop *Cranmer's* Catechism, pub-
 lished in 1543, and dedicated to King *Edward VI.*

We

We may see, it seems, from these extracts, how greatly disproportioned the abilities of this famous Prelate and his colleagues were to the work of Reformation, &c. To what conclusions this will lead, I need not inform the reader. But I take leave to offer a remark or two upon the occasion. In the first place, if the intellectual weakness of our Reformers was really so great as is here represented, Protestants to a man have reason enough to be ashamed of themselves. What answer shall they make to any sensible *Roman-Catholic* who should tease them with these mortifying truths? To my thinking, as none of the exceptionable contents of the passages cited from the Arch-Bishop's Catechism make a part of the doctrine of our Church, they might, in reverence to *his* memory, and for *her* credit, have much better been suppressed. Had this Gentleman contented himself with observing, that the Reformers of the Church were fallible men; and consequently, that the Forms and Offices they have delivered down to us may be capable, in some instances, of alteration and improvement, he had spoken more agreeably to truth, though less adequately to his purpose. For what he has alleged has a plain tendency to shew the necessity rather of *pulling down* than *repairing* our spiritual *building*. On the whole, as he has conducted matters, I know not any one person upon earth under so many obligations to him as the Pope of *Rome*.

I shall

I shall take this opportunity to animadvert on certain dirty aspersions in a late performance from the hand of a rigid non-conformist, and perhaps an avowed unbeliever, and perhaps both.

The anonymous editor of Dr. *Johnson's* Life of Dr. *J. Watts* with Notes, sacrifices to the virulence of his disposition every regard to decency, charity, and truth. It will be proper to trace this calumny to it's source. "Happy, says the celebrated Biographer, will be that reader (viz. of the works of "Dr. *W.*) whose mind is disposed by his verses or "his prose, to imitate him in all but his Non-conformity, to copy his benevolence to man, and "his reverence to God." Is there any thing in this to put a man of candour, or a man of sense out of humour? Yet our Editor asks, "is not this exception, and even the mention of this circumstance, a striking proof of Dr. *Johnson's* bigotted "attachment to the national established mode of "worship?" It is really no proof at all. How far Dr. *J.* was in fact a bigot to establishments, I undertake not to determine; but the period just quoted by no means proves him to have been so. The most moderate Churchman breathing has not the better opinion of Dr. *W.* for his Non-conformity. I cannot think such an one could have "mentioned this circumstance" more tenderly, had he mentioned it at all; and with what propriety Dr. *W.*'s Biographer could have left it unmentioned, I must leave

leave it to this Gentleman to explain to us. "Reverence to God, he proceeds, and benevolence to man, are the two grand essentials of religion. He that possesses these is a true Christian, whatever be the external mode of worship which he adopts. Neither his Conformity nor his Non-conformity will exclude him from the divine favour, nor ought it to be matter of censure to his fellow-creatures. If a man in uniting with any Christian community, appears to follow the dictates of his own conscience, &c, he deserves the esteem of all parties, and to object to his peculiarity of religious profession is the mark of a little mind."

Now this is partly true, partly false, but, you see, as far as Dr. *Johnson* is concerned, wholly impertinent. There is as little as possible of censure, or of objection in the sentence above quoted from him. As to sincerity of persuasion, no body denies the validity of it's pretensions; but at the same time what will make an honest man will by no means constitute a "true Christian." "Reverence to God and benevolence to man are indeed the two grand essentials of all religion;" and, to borrow our author's term, they *MAY* be *possess* by Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics.

"That Dr. *W.* was conscientious in his Non-conformity," will be readily admitted; but surely this will not justify the unfairness, or the duplicity,
or

or the malignity, or the falshood of the following paragraph. " Considering what the terms of ministerial conformity are, says our annotator, it may be justly questioned, whether if all the clergy were equally conscientious, one half of them would not be Dissenters. To declare an *assent and consent* to ALL and EVERY THING contained in the *Thirty-nine Articles, the book of Common Prayer, &c.* (which comprehend such a prodigious number of particulars; many of them very disputable, some of them unintelligible, and others exploded by the wisest and best of men;) is such a requisition as it is hard to be conceived the generality of the clergy can *bona fide* approve. It is indeed WELL KNOWN that MOST of them, and even of the BISHOPS themselves, disbelieve some of the doctrinal articles of the Church, as appears from the general strain of their preaching and of their writings, and that they profess to subscribe them only as articles of peace. If the terms of conformity were a declaration that they *did not believe* " all and every thing, &c," it is undeniable that many (not to say the most) of those that conform might very conscientiously make it. Whether therefore their subscription to the present terms be consistent with simplicity and godly sincerity, it behoves them seriously to enquire. If others think that such a subscription would, in them, be a gross prevarication, and rather than

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“ be chargeable with it, willingly forego the advantages of being in the Church, they ought at least to be respected as honest men. And if Dr. *Johnson* had studied the grounds of Non-conformity (which he appears not to have done) he might have entertained a better opinion of the understandings of Protestant Dissenters as well as their integrity. But this is not the place for entering into that controversy.”

If these representations are just, and these assertions true, the controversy is absolutely decided with a vengeance; and the bulk of the clergy of the Church of *England* are as great a set of sc—ndr—ls as can be produced in the annals of the human race. I shall not waste a moment in vindicating them from imputations so palpably scandalous; but content myself with declaring my firm belief, that Dr *Johnson* would not “ have entertained a better opinion either of the understandings or integrity of Protestant Dissenters” from these samples of BOTH; and that were Dr. *W.* restored to life, he would, for visible reasons, think himself under much greater obligations to the Biographer than to the Annotator.

In short, we are not to wonder at any thing which is advanced by one who maintains, as this writer does in another page of this very performance, that “ in the Scripture-plan no traces of a national Church, or ecclesiastical authority, are to be found.”

It

It may be pertinent to remark farther, that *exceedingly mad* as the Puritans and their friends in the last century were *against* the governors of the Church, and our whole ecclesiastical polity, THEY appear to have been more than ordinarily solicitous to express their full *assent* and *consent* to the most material articles of our faith. Their *quarrel* was not *against* our doctrine but our discipline. I have by me a just and literal translation of the *Confession of Faith*, together with two *Catechisms*, a larger and a less, drawn up by the *Assembly of Divines at Westminster*, in 1651, under the authority, and with the concurrence and approbation of Parliament, (so called,) and of the Kirk of *Scotland*. The 3d clause in the ch. *de Deo et Sacro-sancta Trinitate* runs *verbatim* as follows. “In Deitatis unitate personæ tres sunt unius
 “ ejusdemque essentiæ, potentiæ, ac æternitatis;
 “ Deus Pater, Deus Filius, ac Deus Spiritus Sanc-
 “ tus. Pater quidem a nullo est, nec genitus
 “ nempe nec procedens : Filius autem a Patre est
 “ æterne genitus : Spiritus autem Sanctus æterne
 “ procedens a Patre Filioque.” In the 23d ch. *de statu hominum post mortem, deque resurrectione mortuorum*, we find this clause : “ Novissimo illo die,
 “ qui comperientur in vivis non morientur quidem
 “ sed mutabuntur ; qui mortui fuerint resuscita-
 “ buntur omnes, ipsissimis iis corporibus quibus
 “ viventes aliquando fungebantur, ac non aliis, ut
 “ ut

“ ut qualitate differentibus ; quæ denuo animabus
 “ quæque suis æterno conjugio unientur.”

These doctrines are held out almost in the same words in both *Catechisms*.

From which circumstances I take occasion to ask, whether, as far as we may reasonably collect from the style and the sentiments of the Editor of *Dr. Johnson's Life of Dr. I. Watts* with Notes, the views and the dispositions of the Protestant Dissenters of this age have not a tendency more inimical and destructive, than were those of these same Ancestors of theirs who “ triumphed in the ruin” both of Church and State ?

But is there not after all an inveterate difficulty, which we have rather met than encountered, and much less overcome, and which furnishes Popery with its shrewdest argument, and Infidelity with its strongest handle ? The protestant principle asserts the right of private judgment in matters of religion. And yet precepts relative to obedience to spiritual authority, &c, are as plain as those directions which require us to *prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good, &c.* How shall we reconcile these things ? In consequence of the exertion of this personal right, differences arise in the world, and controversies, the natural issue of them. How are these to be decided ? Is it not a solecism in religion to suppose a controversy without a judge ? Nevertheless we say, and demonstrate

strate too, that the Church of *Rome*, the only Church which pretends to infallibility, has erred, and that even in fundamentals. Accordingly we refer to no arbitration; we acknowledge no rule of faith, no judge of controversy but Holy Scripture. *Supremus iudex* (say the *Westminster* Divines above-mentioned) *a quo omnes de religione controversiæ sunt determinandæ, omnia conciliorum decreta, opiniones, &c., nullus alius esse potest præter Spiritum Sanctum in Scriptura pronunciantem.* †

But are not these *vain words*? Doth any man, or any body of men pretend to the *gift of discerning of Spirits* at this day? Or if they do, are their pretensions admissible? Or can Scripture, with any propriety, be said to be the judge of controversy, when it is the whole and sole ground of it? Do not all parties find means to wrench the authority of the sacred pages to their side? Every *Anti-trinitarian* will say, in the words of *Cbillingworth*, (whatever the real sentiments of the latter might be,) “Propose me any thing out of this Book, “and require whether I believe or no, and seem “it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I “will subscribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no Demonstration can be stronger than this, “God hath said so, therefore it is true.” ‡ But then to the proofs you have to offer, and the texts

† Confess. Fid. Cap. 1. 10.

‡ Religion of Protestants &c. p. 335.

you have to produce, he opposes his texts, and his proofs, such as they are ; or perhaps one general assertion, which no body can deny, *viz.* that there is but “one living and true God.” Where now is the judge of controversy ? What is become of ecclesiastical authority ? Or what have we to say to those who *cast it in our teeth*, that the Church of *England* hath erred as well as the Church of *Rome* ? In short, where is heresy ? And what is schism ?

With a view to the solution of this difficulty, and by way of Supplement to the contents of the foregoing sheets, let us see whether a little enquiry will not enable us sufficiently to ascertain what heresy of the worst sort was in the days of the Apostles themselves, and according to the conception they must by fair construction be understood to have entertained of it.

In his 2d general Epistle St. *Peter* foretells that there would be *false teachers* among Christians, *who* should *privily bring in damnable heresies*, *EVEN denying the Lord that bought them.* (ch. 2. v. 1.) From which passage we can do no less than infer, that the denial of the *Lord that bought* us is of all *heresies* the most *damnable*.

Now whether we do, or do not abide by Dr. *Whitby's* interpretation, who apprehends we are to understand God the Father by the word *Lord* in this passage, “Christ being never styled *δεσποτης* (the “original word) in the New Testament,” the inference

ference will inevitably be one and the same. *Jesus Christ* was confessedly the purchaser of the *Church* with his own blood. In point of nature, or attribute, there can therefore be no difference betwixt these two Persons; the heresy which denies either will be equally damnable, according to Dr. *W's* sentiment. But if we reject it, the Divinity of our Saviour is not less implied in the text before us. For in most evident allusion to this very purchase, *Ye are bought with a price*, says St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*; therefore, continues he, glorify God, i. e., out of all question, *Jesus Christ* who bought you, in your body and in your Spirit, which are God's; i. e., which are Christ's. (1 Cor. 6. 20.) It may be a satisfaction to the reader to compare this passage with the following in the next Chapter. *He that is called being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.* (v. 22, &c.)

In his last and farewell address to the *Children of Israel*, which is called his *Song*, their great Legislator puts this question to them, *is not he thy father that hath bought thee?* * God is said to have bought his people by his deliverance of them from the bondage of *Ægypt*; which was only a type, but indisputably a type of the eternal redemption obtained for us by the precious blood of *Christ*. And is it

* Deutero. Ch. 32. 6.

not just to infer the equality of these Divine purchasers from the nature and value of their respective purchases? The denial of the *Lord that bought us* is therefore in effect the denial of the Divinity of our Saviour.

There is a passage in St. *Jude*, parallel to this which we have had in consideration, that will not be found consistent with it, or with its context, without supposing the same equality. This Apostle complains of certain *ungodly men*, who *denied the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. They *denied our Lord Jesus Christ*, as one with the Father, not as in essence distinct from him. I say, the affinity of this passage to the other, and its own context, not barely warrant, but demand this sense. *Jude the Servant of Jesus Christ, &c, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved by Jesus Christ, and called*. We are very sufficiently authorised to read *by* for *in*,* in this passage; and if so, it is most undoubtedly as much the attribute, or property of the Supreme God to *preserve*, and *to call*, as it is to *sanctify*; which indeed is the discriminative office of the Holy Ghost: whose Divinity, by the way, is here plainly asserted by implication. But we are under no necessity of disturbing the present version. In the 3d verse, the Apostle exhorts Christians to *contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints*. That from the beginning some should *depart from the faith*, or

* See Hammond, &c, &c.

a belief

a belief in *Jesus Christ*, as the *Son of God* by eternal generation, on principles, and for reasons, by which infidels and sceptics are influenced at this day, is by no means matter of astonishment. But supposing the faith of the primitive Christians, the *faith which was once delivered unto the Saints*, to have been merely a faith in *Jesus Christ* as a *prophet*, or as the *Messiah*, or as a *creature* of a more or less *excellent name*, there would, I presume, have been little room for *contention* about it, or danger of its being *denied*.

If we take into examination that impious and strange doctrine of which St. *Jahn* speaks in terms of strong censure and resentment, in his *first* and *second general Epistle*, this research will likewise terminate in an unquestionable proof of our Lord's Divinity; and convince us, that in the denial of it the error consisted. *Every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that Spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard, &c. Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-christ.* (1 John. 4. v. 3. 2 John. v. 7.) Or, as some read these passages, *that confess not Jesus Christ which is come in the flesh*. The import of these texts will not be in the least affected by this variation. That the *man Christ Jesus*, the person who was known by the name of *Jesus Christ*, lived and conversed in the world, did *many won-*

derful works, was contumeliously treated, and at length put to a painful and ignominious death, were facts too recent, and too generally known, to be disputed by any at the time when our Apostle wrote these Epistles. That the *Jesus Christ* of these Epistles was the very identical person whom the Apostle styles in his Gospel the *Son of God*, the *Word* that *was in the beginning with God*, and really and truly *was God*, cannot with the least appearance of reason be questioned. But that *God* was indeed *manifest in the flesh*, took our nature upon him, and *bare our sins in his own body on the tree*, this was a *saying too hard* for the acceptance of those *deceivers, false prophets, and anti-christs*, as St. *John* calls them, and whom, at the 6th v. of Chap. 4. he represents as possessed with the *spirit of error*. Accordingly they were weak, and at the same time bold enough to resolve this great truth into mere semblance and deception; and to affirm that the human person of *Jesus Christ* was a phantom, and lived, and suffered, and died, not really, but in appearance only: which abominably ridiculous notion was, as has been observed, in a great measure adopted afterwards by *Mahomet*, who was offended at those indignities and sufferings which he considered as altogether unworthy of that prophetic character which he acknowledged *Jesus Christ*, as his predecessor, to have been vested with. This doctrine is delivered in the *Koran* in general terms; but the
followers

followers of *Mabomet* differ in their sentiments respecting it. According to some, *Jesus Cbrist* was not nailed to the Cross, but a malefactor who in person much resembled him. The person crucified, say others, was “a spy that was sent to intrap our “Saviour;” and others assert him to have been *Judas*; and others, *Simon the Cyrenian*.

Or if we suppose St. *John* to have had in his eye another heretical tenet of a similar nature and tendency, which was very early disseminated in the Church, viz. that of the *Carpocratians*, &c, who made a distinction betwixt *Jesus* and *Cbrist*; and maintained, that the former suffered, and rose again, but that the latter was impassible, as being purely of a spiritual nature; (agreeably to the idea suggested by *Webster*’s translation of Father *Simon*, which for *every Spirit which confesseth not*, &c, reads which *separateth Jesus*;) the result will necessarily be found to be one and the same. For to what can we reasonably attribute the denial of our Lord’s humanity, or its separation from the divinity, but to an averfeness to acknowledge the union of God and Man in the person of *Jesus Cbrist*? And if so, it will naturally follow that this union was the doctrine of the *Apostles*, and the belief of the primitive Church.

It is well worth observing, that *Polycarp*, in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, quotes word for word the 3d v. of the 4th Ch. of St. *John*’s first Epistle,

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Whosoever does not confess &c; and that *Ignatius*, who conversed with the Apostles, and, upon the death of *Evodius* was appointed Bishop of *Antioch* b as many of the sacred College as were then living, not barely mentions, but most expressly censures and condemns this whimsical opinion of the *Phantomists*, if I may take liberty so to call them. “Stop your ears, says he, in his Epistle to “the *Trallians*, as often as any one shall speak contrary to *Jesus Christ*; who was of the race of “*David*, &c; who was truly born, and did eat “and drink; was truly persecuted under *Pontius* “*Pilate*; was truly crucified, and dead.” And a little after, if, says he, “some who are Atheists, “that is to say Infidels, pretend that he only SEEMED “to suffer, (they themselves only seeming to exist,) “why then am I bound? Why do I desire to fight “with beasts?” In the Epistle of the same Father to the *Smyrneans*, we have the following passage. “And he suffered truly, as he also truly raised up “himself; and not, as some unbelievers say, that “he only SEEMED to suffer.”

Though therefore neither the Apostles, nor the Apostolical Fathers particularly specify what heresy is, it appears by just and natural inference from many passages in their writings originally to have consisted in denying the perfect Godhead, and perfect manhood of our Saviour; and that heresies in general deserve to be considered as so many eva-

sions

sions of these fundamental truths. There is another passage in the Epistle to the *Trallians* which, simply asserting the Divinity of *Jesus Christ*, puts this out of all reasonable doubt. “I exhort you, says the “venerable Author, or rather, not I, but the love “of *Jesus Christ*, that you use none but Christian “nourishment; abstaining from pasture which is “of another kind, I mean heresy. *For † they that “are heretics confound together the doctrine of Jesus “Christ with their own poison, &c.* Wherefore “guard yourselves against such persons. And that “you will do if you are not puffed up, but continue inseparable from *Jesus Christ* our God, and “from your Bishop, and from the commands of “the Apostles.” In short, all these circumstances concur to the establishment of our first Hypothesis. If the Catholic faith of the primitive Christians was the same which is held in the Church of *England* at this day, at and before the publication of the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, as well as the writings of the Apostolical Fathers, their doctrine on the subjects we have been handling is sufficiently uniform and explicit; if otherwise, it is by far too consistent, and too perspicuous.

Agreeably to what has been advanced, we may farther observe the sacred authors frequently referring to some standing doctrines, some capital arti-

† See the references in the Margin.

cles

cles of belief, which had been by them taught, and were by the Church universally received. It will be a hard matter to comprehend the meaning of many passages in the Scriptures, without supposing them to import, or to allude to some such doctrines or principles. The first converts to Christianity are said to have *continued stedfastly in the Apostles, doctrine and fellowship*; * and whatsoever that doctrine might be, it was then no WRITTEN doctrine. St. Paul thanks God, that the *Roman* converts had *obeyed from the heart that FORM OF DOCTRINE which was delivered to them*. † He exhorts the *Thessalonians* to *stand fast, and hold the TRADITIONS which they had been taught, whether by word, or by his Epistle*; ‡ and recommends it to *Timothy*, to *keep that which was committed to his trust*; and to *hold fast the FORM of sound words which he had heard of him*. § He enjoins *Titus* to *reject a man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition*. ** It will be sufficient to add to this the advice of St. *Jude* to Christians in general, which just above fell under notice, *viz.* that they should *earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints*.

It was doubtless with an eye to this *faith*, to the preservation of the same in purity, and to the future peace and prosperity of the Church, that *Jesus*

* Acts ii. 42.

† Rom. vi. 17.

‡ 2 Thess. ii. 15.

§ 2 Tim. i. 13.

** Titus iii. 10.

Christ

Christ gave some, Apostles ; as St. Paul informs us ; and some, Evangelists ; and some, Prophets ; and some, Pastors and Teachers : † nor could the purpose of such appointments have been answered but by a regular succession of some of these characters through all ages.

For the same purpose most unquestionably, *God hath set in the Church, helps, and governments, &c,* as the same Apostle declares to his *Corinthian* converts in the 12th Chapter of his first Epistle to them.

Now how all this could be done ; or how either *Evangelist, Prophet, or Teacher, or Governor* could at *any* time, or in *any* manner, exercise his function, without invading the right of private judgment, as it has of late days been contended for ; or without departing from the *simplicity* of the Gospel in its original state, I pretend not to have sufficient penetration to discover.

Matters appear then to stand thus.—That *Jesus Christ* constituted no arbitrator, no infallible judge, or decider of controversy, &c, in his Church, is demonstrable from the differences, the disputes, and dissensions, relative to *circumcision, &c,* which subsisted in its very infancy. At the same time it is certain the Holy Scriptures speak of a *common faith, and of the common salvation.** You have seen

† Ephes. iv. 11.

* Titus i. 4. Jude v. 3.

what

what grounds we have for our persuasion that such *common faith* was nothing more or less than a belief in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the other articles contained in our Creeds. Under this persuasion, the Church of England, as a national Church, as a Church reformed from the gross errors, corruptions, and superstitions of *Rome*, has not only "power to decree rites, or ceremonies, but authority in controversies of faith;" viz. authority, not to determine, but to declare. Accordingly we do not anathematise, or molest them that renounce our Doctrine, or separate from our Discipline, upon principles avowed by ourselves. We maintain our own rights without encroaching upon the privileges of others. We "discover, condemn, and avoid" what we call and believe to be heresies, without aiming, or wishing to prevent them by coercion. We conceive spiritual government to be as compatible with religious liberty, as temporal jurisdiction is with civil; and that when the Reformers asserted the right of private judgment in matters of religion, the natural right of all men to make use of their own faculties, they could not possibly mean to invest every individual with the "privilege of working out his own salvation by "his own understanding and endeavours," independently on any extraneous assistance, or instruction whatever; and much less to intimate, that he

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is under an indispensable obligation so to do. Were this the case, the Apostle's question, *are all Teachers* must be answered in the affirmative; and the necessary consequence would be, that EVERY BODY, and yet NO BODY would be a *Teacher*. Which is absurd. Neither the justest claim, nor the most reasonable exemption can alter the nature of things. If it be true, that this Church derives her existence from the exertions of human reason, emancipating itself from spiritual slavery; it is as true, that she owes her preservation to decent order, and legal establishment. If it be true, that the bulk of the people naturally wish to act, to think, and to judge for themselves; it is as true, that they naturally take advice or instruction from others, submit to controul, and reverence authority. In short, to whatever causes we are to ascribe that diversity of opinion which distracts the world; how perplexing so ever the present constitution of things may be; or for whatever reasons it has pleased infinite wisdom to place us in a state of trial, infirmity, and imperfection; one general truth must universally be subscribed to; *viz.* that, with respect both to faith and practice, *the Lord knoweth them that are his*, † and will hereafter acknowledge them accordingly.

† 2 Tim. ii. 19.

P. S.

P. S. It is needless to tell the sensible reader, that I have not been professedly contending with any of the latitudinarian writers whose works are incidentally quoted, or referred to, in the progress of these Discourses and Annotations. If what has herein been offered be sufficiently solid and satisfactory, they are severally replied to, though not in form, yet in effect.

T H E E N D.

N. B. The reader is desired to correct a few errors of the Press with his pen; especially in p. 84. l. 15.—109. l. 1.—147. l. 16.—333. l. 26.—334. l. 11.

**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

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